

THE
FLAME
FLOWER





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The Flame-Flower

And Other Stories



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The Flame-Flower

And Other Stories



Written and Illustrated by

Jas. F. Sullivan



London
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1896



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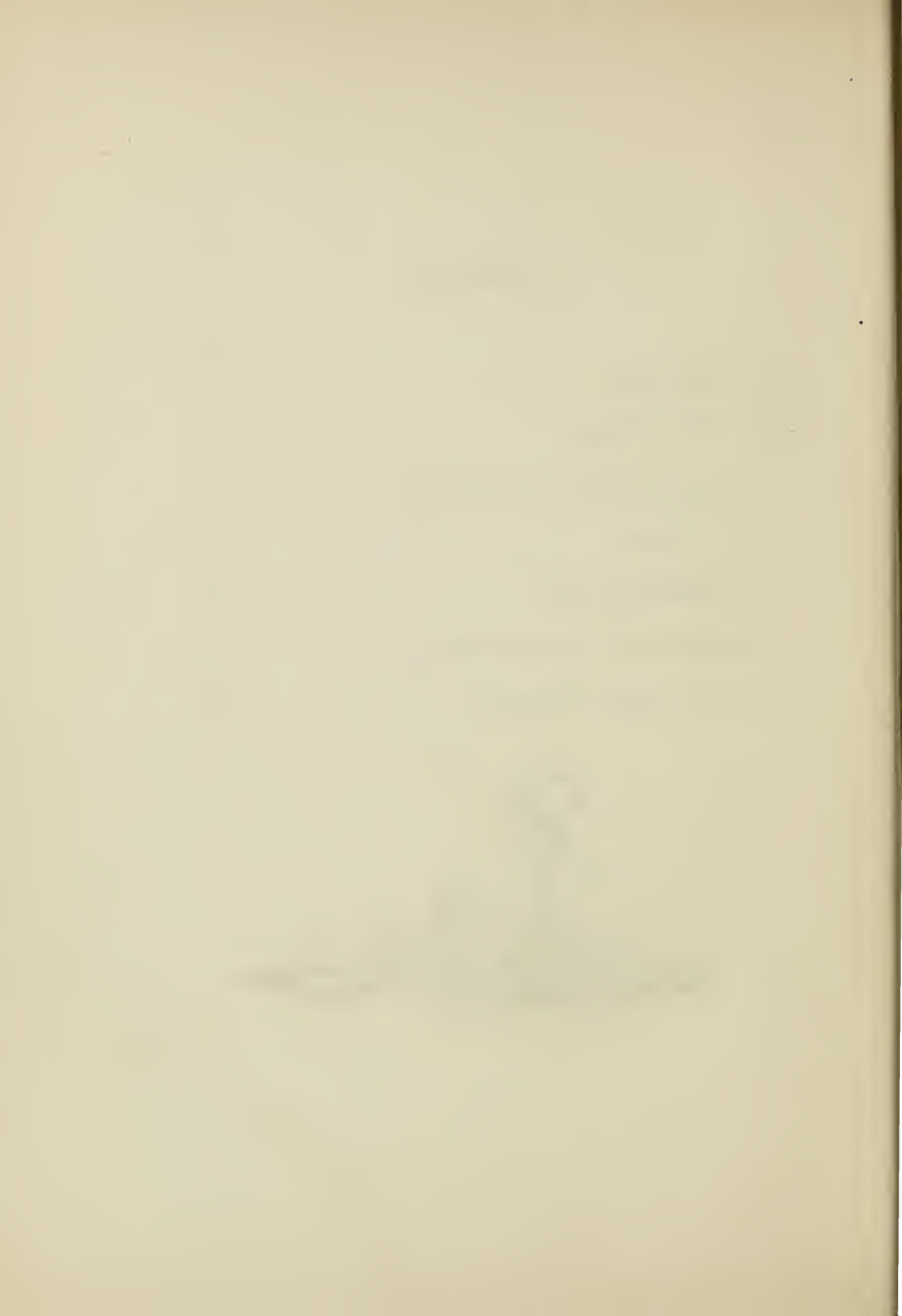
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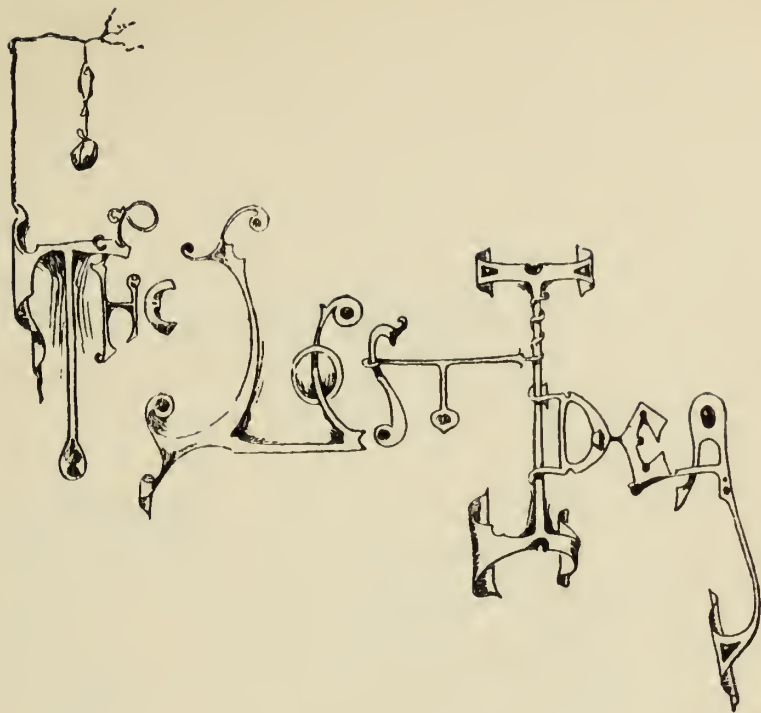
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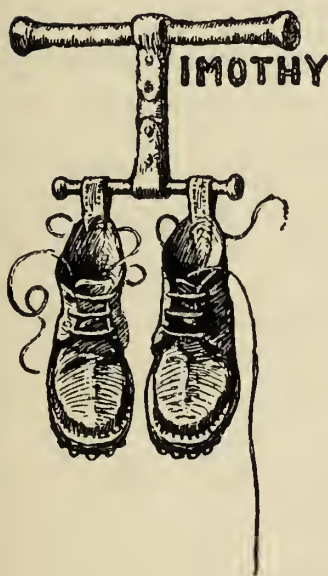
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The Lost Idea



was a shoemaker. Two years ago Timothy had made a pair of hob-nailed boots for Jarge the ploughman; and Mr. William the draper, passing along the road, had caught sight of those boots down in a furrow right at the farther corner of a twenty-acre field, and had stopped in admiration and wonder, and called out—

“Jarge, what wonderful boots you have on!”

“Ah! That’s what they are—wonderful!” Jarge had replied.



“Jarge, whoever *can* have made you those boots?” said Mr. William.

“Why, Timothy made them, as you might say,” Jarge had said.



Then Mr. William the draper, quite overcome with wonder, had gone home and looked in the till and said, “I can afford a new pair of boots. I will go to Timothy and get him to make *me* a wonderful pair.”

And the Squire’s factor, Mr. James, had happened to go into the draper’s, and had caught sight of the draper’s boots right down in the dark behind the counter—(for a really good thing cannot be hidden!)—and had said, “O Mr. William! what wonderful boots you have on! Whoever made such boots?”

And Mr. William had said, “No other than Timothy, I do assure you!”

And so the Squire’s factor had counted up his money, and had ordered Timothy to make *him* a wonderful pair of boots too; and the Squire had caught sight of them right under a rug on the floor of the factor’s dog-cart; and then the Squire had reckoned up how much the new succession duties had left him

and had found it just enough to buy a pair of boots with ; and had ordered a pair of Timothy.

And so things were going on, until it was whispered that the Lord-Lieutenant of the county had decided to order a pair of boots of Timothy ; when one day Timothy's wife said—

“Tim, you have worked very hard for a long time ; I think you ought to take a holiday.”

“I am very contented without it,” replied Timothy. And, indeed, Timothy was quite fat and rosy with contentment ; but he thought it over, and decided that his wife knew best. Now, wives nearly always *do* know best ; only husbands, being conceited, pretend not to believe it.

So Timothy reached down his fishing-rod, and trotted out to take a holiday ; and as he went through the village all the inhabitants turned pale and said, “We hope Timothy is not going to leave



his work and keep us without our wonderful boots !”

Timothy, plump and happy, sat down on the grass by the river and fished ; and during the day he caught three small bleak, and hung them up by their gills to twigs, with weights on their tails to stretch them out as long as possible, in order to surprise his fishing-club with his catch. And while he sat fishing he suddenly got an idea in his head. And this is the turning-point of the story ; so please notice it well.

Very well ; at five o'clock he got up, took down his three bleak from the twigs, flattened out the marks made round their tails by the string which had suspended the weights, and trotted towards home.

Just as he had got half-way home he suddenly stopped, clapped his hand to his forehead, and turned very pale. “ Bless my soul !” he said, “ I have forgotten to bring my Idea !”

He ran back as hard as he could and searched in the grass where he had been sitting, but he could not find his Idea ;

he turned up all the large stones, but he could not find his Idea ; and he peered down



into the clear water, but his Idea was not there!

So Timothy turned very sadly away, muttering, "That Idea was the best thing I ever had in my life!" and crawled dismally home.

"Why, Tim, dear, you don't seem well!" said his wife.

"I've lost my Idea!" said Timothy, with tears in his eyes.

"Well, never mind," said Mrs. Timothy, "you'll soon get another."

"*Get another!*" said Timothy indignantly. "Why, it's the only Idea I have ever got in my life; and it was such a beauty—so bright and round, and beautiful to touch! There isn't another like it in the village! And now I've lost it, and don't know what it was about; and I can't eat my tea!"

All the next day Timothy neglected his boot-making, and searched on the river-bank for his Idea.

"It was so brilliant!" he said dismally.

"Then how is it that you don't see it glittering?" asked his wife.

"Be quiet, woman!" said Timothy angrily. "Women have no reason!"

The day after that Timothy sat brooding in his shop without doing a stitch of work, although a special messenger had come that morning with an order for a pair of boots for the Lord-Lieutenant of the county.

“Tim, dear, wouldn’t it be better to go on with your work, and forget the Idea?” said Mrs. Timothy.

“I can’t,” said Timothy; “my heart is breaking about my Idea. There isn’t such an Idea in the county—in the world! I shall never be happy again!” and he fairly broke down and sobbed.

“Oh, why did I ever persuade him to take a holiday!” cried poor Mrs. Timothy. “It’s all my fault!” and she sat down and wept silently.

“Women make too much fuss about things!” growled Timothy.

From that time Timothy altered dreadfully. He entirely neglected his work, and did nothing but lurk about the village, searching for his lost Idea. The Lord-Lieutenant of the county came in person to beseech him to execute his order for boots, and said that

he should be unable to hold the grand reception which he had arranged for, if he did not get his boots ; but Timothy would not go on with them.

Timothy became a nuisance to everybody. Mr. Joseph, the vicar, looking into a shop window, felt a hand in his coat tail pocket, and found Timothy searching in it.



"This is a great liberty!" said the vicar. "Whatever are you doing?"

"Looking for my Idea," said Timothy.

Then Mrs. William, the draper's wife, returning home one day, found her parlour all upside down, with all the cupboards turned out, the covering of the arm-chair unpicked, and the carpet pulled up ; and there was Timothy feeling underneath it.

"I'm surprised at you, Mr. Timothy!" said Mrs. draper. "You must have gone mad!"

"Not I," said Timothy ; "I'm looking for my Idea."

He looked in everything—up people's chimneys, under their hearth-rugs, in their dust-holes ; he even opened their letters when he could get hold of them : nothing was safe from his search.

“ We will *not* put up with it ! ” said everybody ; and Timothy was handed over to Mr. Benjamin, the policeman : but Timothy worried him so dreadfully by peeping into his pockets and taking off his helmet to look inside it, that the policeman got quite worn out, and let him go.

“ O Timothy, dear ! ” said his wife, weeping, “ your boots are dropping off your feet, and so are mine, and so are the children's. Do, at least, make us a pair each ! ”

But Timothy wouldn't ; he had an appointment to search under the church pulpit for his Idea.

II



NOW, one day as Timothy was passing a poultry-yard his attention was attracted by the great cackling made by a Cochin-China hen. Timothy had grown very suspicious and mistrustful of all his neighbours, even the dumb creatures; and he said—

“That hen would never be so very proud and triumphant without some good reason. She has evidently stolen my Idea!”

And he watched the hen for a long time, until at length she laid an egg.

“No,” said Timothy. “Laying an egg is a very poor idea—my Idea was very, very much better than that: *she* hasn’t stolen it.”



The next day he saw old Nebuchadnezzar the cottager standing at his little green gate and chuckling to himself very proudly.

"I will watch that old fellow," said Timothy to himself. "He wouldn't be so jubilant unless he had hit on something above the common. I'm certain he has stolen my Idea."

He watched old Nebuchadnezzar; and he saw him place a ladder against his house and climb up with barrow-loads of earth and throw the earth down his chimney until he had filled it up; and when Nebuchadnezzar had filled it up he took a little something out of his pocket and popped it into the earth in the chimney-pot, and patted the earth neatly down.

"That's my Idea he's hidden there!" thought Timothy; and next morning at dawn he slyly got old Nebuchadnezzar's ladder and stole up to the roof, and raked out the little object with his finger.

"Bah!" said Timothy; "*that* dirty little thing is not my beautiful Idea; it's only a common tree-seed."

However, he carefully put it back and patted down the earth again; for he felt certain that old Nebuchadnezzar *had* his Idea somewhere, and wanted to see the affair through.

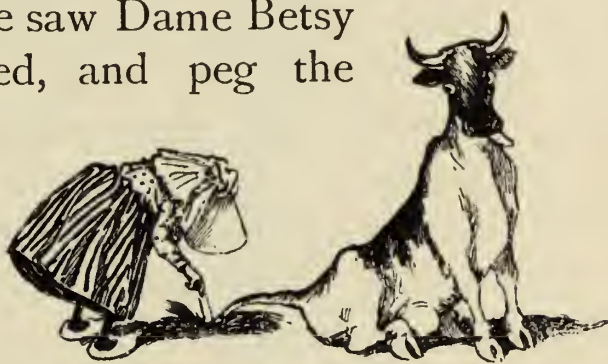
When old Nebuchadnezzar had patted down the earth in his chimney-pot, he had gone down into his cottage and lighted the fire under the chimney; and in a short time a little plant sprouted from the pot above. Owing to the genial warmth communicated to the mould by the fire the plant grew, in a few weeks, to a large tree; and on it grew all sorts of delicate fruits — peaches, pine-apples, pomegranates, bananas, dates, oranges, and so forth. It was a wonderful sight; and the position of the tree prevented the boys picking the fruit.

“Well, it’s a very fair idea in its way,” thought Timothy, “but I see it isn’t *my* Idea—*my* Idea was far, far grander than that, I’m certain.”

Some time after that, in the autumn, he noticed that Dame Betsy with the Cow led her cow into her kitchen-garden—(which was

not her usual custom)—and tossed her head seven times with pride.

“Then Dame Betsy has stolen my Idea,” thought Timothy; and he watched from behind a hedge. He saw Dame Betsy make up a hot-bed, and peg the cow’s tail down to the earth with hair-pins. You have seen your gardener peg down carnation stems? Very well; she pegged down the cow’s tail just like that.



The cow did not like it much at first, and proposed to get up and walk away; but she was a good cow, and was easily persuaded to sit still; and all through the winter Betsy kept the end of the tail moist with warm water, and took out the cow’s meals to her, and often sat and read to her out of a gardening book about carnations, to encourage her.

In the spring a number of tiny black-and-fawn heads sprouted up through the

earth from the roots thrown out by the tail; and when Betsy had carefully detached them and potted them up in small pots, they grew so rapidly that by midsummer they were big enough to turn out into the meadow to graze. Beautiful little Alderney cows they were—about twenty of them.

“Hum—yes,” said Timothy, “that’s really a good idea—but it’s not mine! Mine was worth fifty of it!”

He never left off searching. One day Old Nathaniel, who was the dirtiest old man in the village, and the laziest, and the most grumbly, and had the longest nose, came out with his barrow and screamed for joy. Now it had always been Old Nathaniel’s duty to wheel his barrow, full of stones, half a mile down the road, as far as the pound; and he hated the trouble. But this morning he attached two little balloons, which he had made, to himself and his barrow; and then he filled them with gas; and when they were full, he and the barrow rose to about three feet in the air.



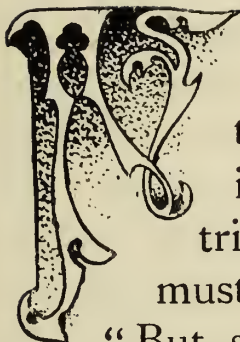
Now this action of his requires explanation. He had heard from the schoolmaster the week before that the world is in the habit of turning round once in every twenty-four hours ; and it had occurred to him that if he could detach himself from the world and let it go round without him he could just wait until the place he wanted to reach came round to him and then drop quietly down and land there without any exertion on his part. It is not the right thing to escape one's duties in this way, and I am not praising him for doing it ; I am only saying that he did it.

Well, round went the earth (just as usual), and the pound reached him in such a short time that he overshot the mark by three miles, and had to wheel his barrow back all that way ; but he soon got into the way of dropping at the right spot with a little practice, and (very improperly) saved himself a lot of trouble.

“ That's a really excellent idea—I admit it,” said Timothy ; “ but it is *not* mine. Mine was worth five hundred of even that.” You

perceive that his admiration of the Idea he had lost grew every day ; he had become really foolish about it. No one but a person who writes story-books should fancy his ideas so wonderful as all that.

III

 O, my Idea cannot be in the village," said Timothy. "I believe that whoever found it has taken it away—perhaps to foreign countries, to sell it to an emperor. I must go and search for it."

"But surely, Timothy, you will not go away and leave me and the children all alone!" said his wife. "We shall all be starved. I have not a penny left now from what I saved from your earnings when you attended to your business. You must be crazy!"

"But only think," said Timothy, "I shall find my Idea, and sell it to an emperor for more money than you can imagine; and then I shall return, and we will all have more food than we ever had before—three times as much—more than is good for us."

And meanwhile," he added generously, "I will beg the Squire to assist you."

So Timothy went away; and his poor wife had to work very hard to keep herself and the children, and could hardly do it.

"He must be crazy to leave you like this," said the neighbours.

"How dare you say my husband is crazy!" said Mrs. Timothy indignantly; "he did perfectly right; and you are nasty bad people!"

For seven years Timothy wandered about the world. He had grown lean and miserable. He slept under hedges, and got hardly anything to eat. Every day, when some great poet or statesman had a splendid idea, Timothy believed it was his own; but it never turned out brilliant enough to be *his*.

And one day, at the end of the seven years, he wandered back to his native village. He was too miserable and depressed to go at once to his wife and children, although he longed to. He crawled along the side of the river, and sat down, heartbroken, on the very spot where he



had lost his Idea so long ago, and sobbed. He happened to put his hand on the grass, and it felt something under it. He leaped up with a shout. He hugged the little thing to his breast and nearly choked with joy, and it was several minutes before he could summon up courage to look at it; and when he did, he let it drop and hid his face in his thin hands and moaned. It was not brilliant in the least! It was as dull as ditch-water, and very, very small. That Idea which he had believed so great and splendid was only—“*I think I had better go home to tea!*”

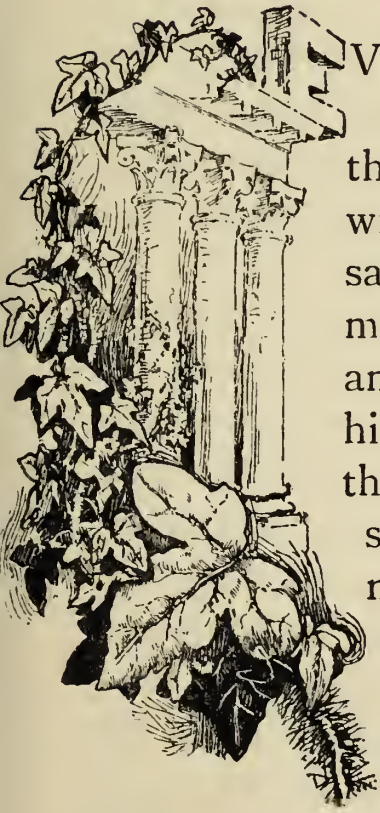
Then Timothy turned away and crept home; and when his wife returned from her hard day's work, there was Timothy sitting on his stool, working hard at a boot. And now he's the King's Bootmaker, living in a beautiful house next door to the palace; and he and his wife and his children are the plumpest and merriest people in the whole city.







The Flame-Flower



VAN and Honora stood hand in hand on the inlaid floor of the great house. "Here we will dwell when we are wed," said Evan; "for the house is mine. Licinius has departed, and returns no more; and, at his parting, he gave it me for the love he bore me and the service I had done him, and my father before me."

But the great house was desolate, and falling to decay. In the fore-court the grass grew green between the stones, and the painted stucco of the pillars around had peeled off in great flakes,

which lay upon the floor ; owls and bats reared their young in the inner rooms, and the household altar was moss-grown. The gardens around were tangled, and overrun with briar and bramble ; yet they had been beautiful. And the house stood on a hill-side, and the view from it was fair and wide.

From the house one could look away to the high hill where stood the camp of the conquerors, which was deserted now ; and across great meadows and tilled fields to the dark forest which was no-man's-land, where the bad spirits lived and planned evil.

And Licinius the owner of the great house had gone at length to return no more ; indeed these several years he had not dwelt in it, being called away to the far South by the troubles of his own country and his own city. He had been a rich man, and this house had been his residence in summer ; he had been lord over Evan's father and over Evan, and over all lesser men for many a broad mile ; for he was of the blood of the conquerors who had ruled the land for four centuries. Evan's father had been

head-man under Licinius, and his trusted bailiff and friend; Honora's mother had been a freewoman and favourite in the household of Patricia wife of Licinius, both here and at the noble lady's house in the great city of the far South.

But misfortune came ever more heavily upon the great city of the South; and Licinius was a poor man now; and he had given his empty house—for indeed he could not keep it—to Evan.

None had repaired nor tended the desolate house; for men were troubled in their minds because of the departure of their conquerors, who had protected them so long; and were without government, and confused; and nought remained in the great house for robbers to take, for these had torn off all the fittings of bronze to make into weapons and tools.

Evan was a young man, strong and fair; and he gathered his cattle into the pastures around the great house, and left his own farmer's house of stone and timber, and dwelt in the gift-house. His lands he kept,

joining them to those of the gift-house ; and he and his men—for he had many serving-men, being a head-man and of repute and strong of hand—he and his men repaired the house as well as they might ; for Evan had learned some of the useful arts from the conquering race.

Then Evan took the hand of Honora, and led her to the great house as his wife ; and they were happy.

Honora was fair as she stood in the meadow in the morning looking toward the risen sun ; and her hair was golden, so that Eostre the dawn goddess rejoiced in it, playing with it.

But Morddec stole forth from the gloomy forests where the spirits dwell, and passed between Honora and the risen sun ; so that he made a black shadow between the sun and her, shutting out the light from her hair ; and Honora shivered as the shadow passed.

Now Morddec was by one side of the family of Evan, but by the other side he was the son of the wolf-woman ; and the

deeds of Morddec were evil, so that men hated and feared him, shuddering at his name.

In those days all the kindred of him who did an evil deed were punished for his deed : so that many a time had Evan and his kindred been forced to pay great sums in cattle and in money to the families of those whom Morddec had injured.

But the man did evil to those of his own kindred as well as to strangers ; so that his own kindred had driven him forth from among them. Then Morddec had gone away into the dark forest which is no-man's-land, to herd with the wolves and the evil spirits ; and he hated all men, especially Evan his cousin, and sought always to do them injury.

It was said that this Morddec had the power from his mother of changing to a wolf, and of casting evil spells upon men ; those who had dared to pass the dark forests had told of a great black wolf with eyes that shone like burnished copper, and how they had shivered as he passed in the

gloom : but men believed strange things in those days.

Evan and his wife Honora were very happy ; though Honora had shivered when the wolf-shadow passed between the sun and her, and had not felt so content as before for all that day. But she loved Evan, and they walked hand in hand in the pastures.



One day a daughter was born to them.

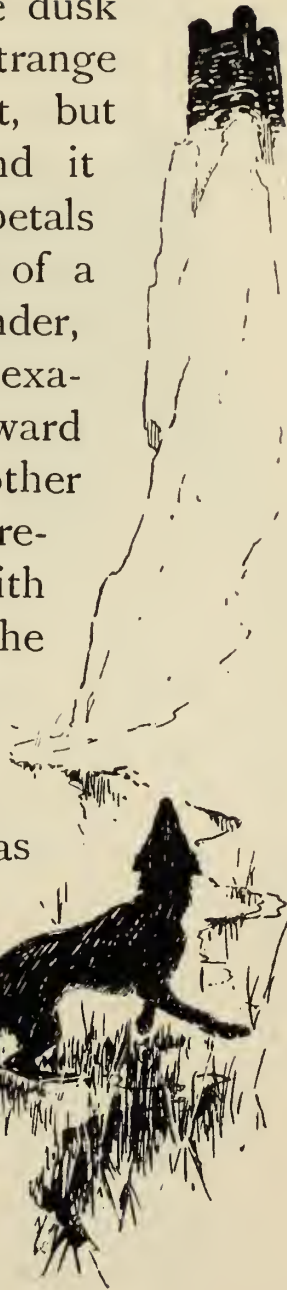
On the day when she was born Evan, standing at dusk at the entrance of his house, saw a strange cluster of small flowers of the colour of gold in the meadow in front.

He wondered at this ; for it was winter, and the meadows were covered with snow, so that it was not the time of flowers.

As he watched the flowers, the dusk deepened into darkness ; yet the strange flowers did not fade from sight, but showed ever more brightly ; and it seemed to him as though their petals moved, or flickered, as the flame of a fire flickers. Then, full of wonder, Evan went toward the flowers to examine them ; and as he went toward them, he saw here and there other groups of these flowers, so that presently the meadows were alight with them and all yellow ; but when he stooped to pluck any of them, these had gone ; where they had stood the snow was melted in a ring, and the green grass was bare.

And as Evan stood in the midst of the meadows he saw a great black shadow that was shaped like a wolf come out from the nearest fringe of forest.

Although the wolf was distant



many a javelin-cast, Evan saw that its eyes shone like burnished copper ; and when the wolf-shadow had gazed upon the flowers, it came forth to cross the meadows toward the house ; but when its foot touched the groups of flowers their petals leapt up suddenly to ten times their height, so that the wolf-shadow gave forth a great howl of pain and fear, fleeing again into the forest.

All this Evan saw dimly, except the brightness of the flowers ; for the light of day had almost gone.

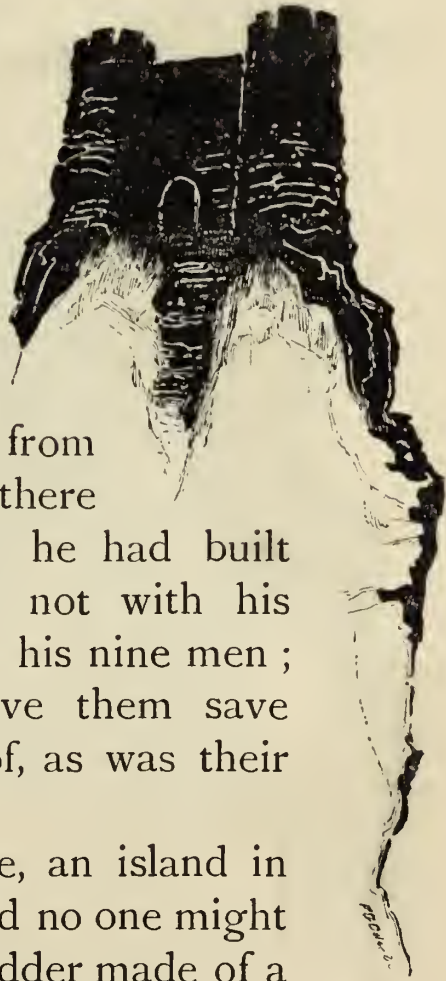
All this happened on the day when Evan's daughter was born, at the hour of her birth ; and she was called Flamma, in the language of the conquerors whom Evan loved.

Now Morddec, Evan's cousin who hated all men, dwelt in a little castle of stone which he had built upon a rock in the dark forests where no good man dared to dwell. He and his men had built it ; for Morddec had gathered to him nine others, outlaws and landless men, who had been driven forth

to the forests, like him, for evil deeds; and these obeyed his will, for he was strong so that they feared him.

These men had built the castle with the stones of a temple made by the conquerors long before near that spot; with much labour they had moved the stones and raised them on to the rock, for Morddec had learned the art of building from the conquering race. But there were some who said that he had built the castle by magic arts, not with his hands. Here lived he and his nine men; and he had nought to give them save what they robbed others of, as was their way.

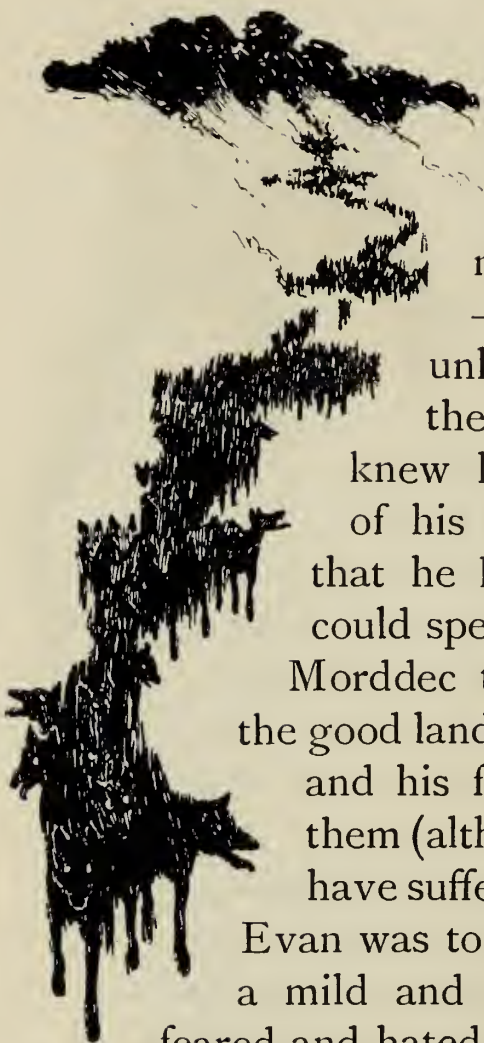
The rock was, as it were, an island in the midst of flat ground; and no one might reach the castle save by a ladder made of a fir-trunk set with pegs. By day and by night the ladder was drawn up into the castle, so that no stranger might climb; and by night



the wolves came forth from the forest, and crossed the dangerous swamp that lay all round the rock, and howled about the castle of Morddec; so that none except him and his men dared venture near it for fear of the wolves —no, nor even his men unless he were near to check the wolves; for the wolves knew him, being (as was said) of his kin; and men even said that he knew their language, and could speak with them.

Morddec thought day and night of the good lands of Evan, and of his cattle and his fair house, and longed for them (although the people would not have suffered him to hold them); but Evan was too strong for him, although a mild and kindly man; so Morddec feared and hated him.

One day, when Flamma was seven years old, Evan and Honora and Flamma stood in



the pastures in the sun ; and now the sun was high, so that none afoot could cast a shadow upon them ; and their hair was golden in the sun.



But something seemed to pass above ; it was like a little cloud, yet formed as a wolf, and it cast a shadow over them ; Evan and his wife felt a great chill at their hearts

as the shadow passed. Then Evan thought of the saying of men that Morddec's mother, the wolf-woman, had the power of passing through the air at will.

Then as the cloud passed, Honora drew her hand out from the hand of Evan, where it had lain; and when Evan noticed this and looked upon her, she turned away her head and would not look at him; but bit her lip and gazed away gloomily at the dark forests.

Then she turned from Evan and little Flamma, saying no word, and so went slowly back to the house; Evan gazing after her, wondering.

Evan took the child by the hand, and followed his wife to the house.

"Honora," he said, "this day is the day of the year on which we were wed; and my freemen prepare a feast for us that we may rejoice, and they in our happiness!"

But she turned away her head, making no answer.

Evan said, "I pray you come and show yourself to them; for they wait to lay their

offerings at your feet and to wish you gladness."

"I am indisposed," Honora said, "let them rejoice without me."

Evan took the child by the hand, and went out, wondering. In the room that was called "triclinium," which had been the dining-hall of Licinius, the serving-men laid boards upon trestles, preparing a feast. Some vessels of silver and of glass there were, which Patricia had given to Honora's mother in the days past; and many meats were being prepared, for the people had learned some of the luxury of their conquerors. Some men spread sweet-scented herbs and rushes upon the floor, and others hung up branches and garlands of flowers. Then came the freemen, bringing gifts of corn, and bracelets and brooches of silver-work and of bronze and carved stone. So they sat down to the feast, and Evan excused Honora, saying she was sick; but the feast was a sad one, save for the presence of the child Flamma, whom the freemen took upon their knees, caressing her golden hair.

When the feast was over Evan went to seek Honora in her room. But she was not there. Then he sought her in the meadows, but found her not ; and so toward evening, still seeking, he came into the edge of the dark forest.

Now in those days the townships or dwelling-places of the people were surrounded by belts of forest which separated them one from the other ; and none lived in the forests, for these were full of elves, and bad spirits, and all manner of strange beasts which breathed fire and noxious vapours, and would slay men. None passed willingly through the forests, but would journey (when journeying was needed) by the great roads which the conquerors had made ; and it was an evil thing to say of any man that he dwelt in the forests, or even that he went much in them ; for men knew by that that he must be in league with the dark spirits dwelling there ; and men would shun such an one, and might kill him as an evil-doer. Evan feared the forests less than most men, for he had dwelt much with the conquering race and knew

more than his fellows ; and the conquerors had spoken less of evil spirits than of dryades or wood fairies, and of naiades or nymphs of the fountains, and of fauns ; and these were harmless to men and beautiful. Yet Evan also seldom went in the forests, fearing that men should think evil of him.

Now, in much grief and wonder, hardly knowing whither he went, he strayed into the borders of the woods, and so came upon Honora sitting under a great oak ; she seemed not to see him as he advanced, but gazed gloomily upon the ground ; and it seemed to him that he saw in the gloom behind her the shadow of the wolf. Then Evan took her by the hand and led her home, and brought Flamma to her.

But Honora took no heed of the child. She said, " Leave me alone, for I am weary and ill-content ! "

" What would you have, Honora ? " Evan said. " Will I not give you all that is in my power, even to my life, if you will ? Speak to the child, for she pines at your neglect. Why are you changed so ? "

Honora rose, and pressed her hand upon her forehead. "Why am I not rich and great like Patricia?" she said angrily. "Why is our home so mean—this land so dull and boorish? Let me go to the city of the South, where there are palaces of marble, and great shows, and splendour! You—you are not a soldier like the captains of the South—you wear no gilded armour and fine plumes, but dress in leather and coarse stuff, and herd with clowns! Leave me!"

Then Evan bowed his head, and took the child by the hand, and went out to sorrow; and the wolf howled mockingly in the distant forest.

Often after that did Evan seek for Honora, ever finding her in the forest and leading her home; and each time she came more unwillingly. The people began to talk of this and to shake their heads when they spoke of Evan and his wife, whispering that they held communion with evil spirits and wolves; and they drew away as Evan passed.

One day, at this time, when Evan walked

in the meadows by the fringe of the forest, Morddec came out from among the trees greeting him, and linked his arm in Evan's, and so conversed with him.

Evan was a mild and kindly man, and he did not repulse his cousin, hating him less than others did, for all that Morddec had often tried to harm him ; so he talked with him.

But there were those who stood in the fields at their labour ; and these saw the two conversing, and pointed at them, saying, " It is true ! Evan holds communion with the son of the wolf-woman. He is an evil man ! "

All in the township heard of this, and talked of it, and said, " This man is not fit to be our head-man. He is in league with the evil spirits of the forests ! "

So all men began to shun Evan, and to fear him ; and his freemen drew away from him ; and the serfs who tilled his fields, tended his flocks and herds, and sat at his board, began to depart one by one, going to other masters ; until there were few of them left.

Then his sheep and cattle strayed into the forest, and were slain by fierce dragons and other beasts ; and his fields began to fall into neglect for want of hands to till them ; and the freemen often met and talked of thrusting Evan from their midst.

When Honora saw that they grew poorer she grew more gloomy, and would not speak to Evan nor to the child, but seemed to hate them.

The wolves began to come forth from the forest and to take his sheep, and the sheep of the other farmers ; by hundreds they came forth, and could not be scared away.

At this time Flamma was very sweet to look upon, and her hair was golden like her mother's. Honora sat apart in a window with her chin upon her hand, looking toward the setting sun. She had thrust her spinning-wheel from her in wrath, so that it lay broken. She looked and saw the wolves coming from the forest, and the meadow was grey with them. Flamma crept to her side, laying her head upon her lap to be caressed ; but there passed a

black cloud like a wolf across the setting sun, and Honora thrust Flamma away. Then Flamma, weeping, went to another window and gazed out at the meadows ; and in the dusk she saw a little cluster of strange flowers that showed among the grass like little flames of fire. The wolves, too, saw them at a distance, and fled back. Then the flowers were gone ; but Flamma ceased to weep, though she knew not why.

The next morning, when Evan awoke, Honora was gone from the house. He went out from the door to seek her ; and there met him a great throng of men, with staves and javelins in their hands, clamouring.

And they sprang forward to kill him at his door ; but Flamma came out and stood by his side, gazing upon them.

Then they drew back because of the beauty of the child, but they cried to Evan, "Get you gone into the forests to herd with the wolves and spirits ; for if we find you here when the sun be risen, you shall die !"

One hurled a javelin at Evan, and it stuck in the doorpost, quivering.

Then Evan took up Flamma and fled into the forest ; and as he looked out from the edge of it, the sun had risen, and the roof of his house was in flames ; for the people destroyed it for fear of evil spirits that might lurk in it.

When the people had let Evan depart, they repented of it, making a hue and cry after him to slay him, so that he had to flee into the heart of the forest to save Flamma and himself ; but when he had built the child a hut of mud and stones and branches to stay in, and covered the floor with dry fern, and got food for her, he ventured once more into the borders of the forest by himself, seeking for Honora. Many times was he nearly slain by the javelins and arrows of those who hunted him ; but he escaped, and so came upon Honora after many days, and led her to the hut.

There, with a javelin which one had hurled at him to kill him, he hunted the wild things of the forest, and so got food for Honora and Flamma day by day ; but Honora would not speak, but sat with her chin in her hand

brooding. When Evan took Flamma and placed her hand silently in her mother's, Honora thrust her away fiercely, hurting her.

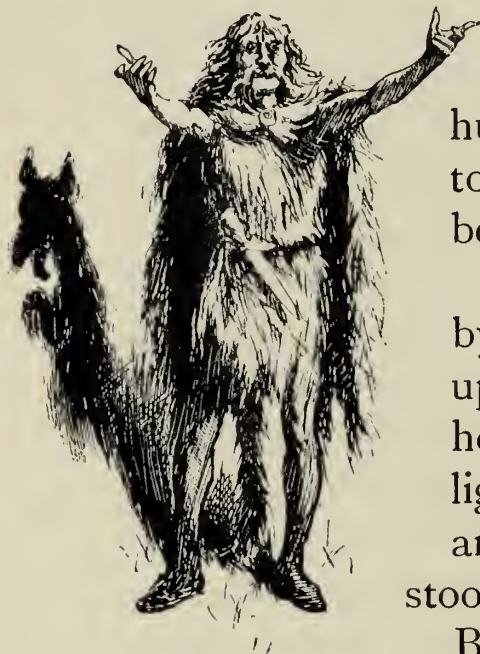
"You love your child no more!" said Evan.

"I love none any more," said Honora; and she turned her face away to where the sun had set. For some days ago, when she had looked from the window, the sun had been setting; but now it was set.

They were safe from men in the place where they dwelt, for no man would have dared to venture so far into the forest; moreover, the place where the hut stood was girt about with marshes, which even the beasts feared.

Day by day Evan, hunting alone in the forest, thought of Honora, how great a change had come upon her; and, but for the child, he would have despaired, for his good house was gone, and all his wealth in flocks and cattle and swine, and his good name among men. But day by day he went in silence to Honora's side, and stroked

her golden hair, and took her hand in his, hoping always that she might cast off this sorcery—for that he knew it must be. But she changed no more, nor would look upon him, and drew away her hand from his.



One day Evan took Flamma by the hand when he went forth to hunt; for that day he feared to be by himself, his grief being too great to bear.

He stood, holding Flamma by the hand, and gazed upon the morning sun in her hair; for a shaft of light pierced the thick forest and fell upon her; and he stooped to kiss her.

But a shadow passed across them. Evan knew that it was the shadow of the wolf. And he did not kiss the child, but cast away her hand from him, wondering at himself. He fled from Flamma, hurrying away without purpose. Soon he heard a step behind him,

and turned ; and there stood Morddec, son of the wolf-woman, mocking him.

Hatred of all men and all things were in Evan's heart, and bitterness and rage. He raised his javelin and hurled it at Morddec ; but it struck his breast as though it had struck a shield of bronze, and bounded off ; and Morddec laughed mockingly and was gone.

Now Evan returned no more by daylight to look upon his wife and child, but took their meat secretly by night, and laid it at the door of the hut and stole away.

Flamma was now ten years of age, fair beyond words, and of a sweet presence. For a year she had not looked upon her father, nor had her mother spoken to her ; and she wandered alone amid the marshes and the forest, talking with the birds and the squirrels ; and these loved her and came to her. But often she sat beneath the trees and sobbed, so that the wild things of the forest wondered at her, and crept close to her as if to console her.

One day, as she sat thus, having strayed

further than usual from the hut, Evan came by ; and she ran to him, falling at his feet, and clasped his hand.

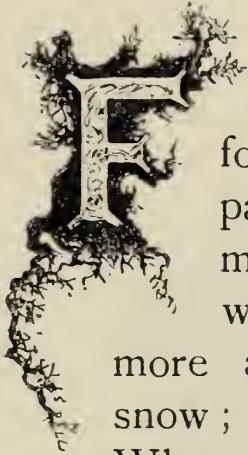
But his look was wild like that of the wolf, and he threw her from him and ran away.



Then Flamma cried aloud, and wandered away further into the darkness of the forest ; and Evan stopped and turned, and stood watching her. He passed his hand across his brow as one dazed, and tried to call her

back to him, but he could not call. He stretched out his arms toward her, and his eyes were wild, and she saw him not; so he watched her until she was gone in the darkness, and then he fell upon his face.

II



URTHER and further into the forest Flamma wandered. She was pale, for of late the sickness of the marshes had been upon her. It was winter, and where the trees stood more apart the ground was thick with snow ; but she felt no cold, only sorrow. When she had wandered far, she sank at the foot of a great rock in the moonlight, sitting as one benumbed. She longed feebly that the rock might open and let her creep in out of the cold, for she began to feel the cold at last.

As she sat, her hand rested on the snow at the foot of the rock. She seemed to feel a little warmth in the hand, as though a pleasant fire had been near ; and the warmth seemed to grow greater, until the blue nails

had turned pink again. When she moved her hand to see, beneath it was a little flower-bud of the colour of gold, which was no sooner uncovered than it grew to a flower whose petals were not still, but gently flickered, casting a light around.

Flamma stretched out her frozen arms toward the flower as to a fire, and it warmed her through.

All the snow dissolved from about the flower to the distance of an arm's length, and the ground grew dry; so that Flamma was warm, as one in a house of turf.

"The flower could not rend the rock to make a cave for me," thought she, "but it can dissolve the snow, which is as good!"

Even as she thought this, the petals of the flower stretched out and licked the base of the rock; and their heat so grew that Flamma was forced to cover her face with her hands and draw further away. The snow was dissolved for many yards around, and the rock grew red and then white, and crumbled away, until it was rent from base to top. The snow had been dissolved by

gentle warmth, but the rock was consumed by fierce heat; for the snow is cold from



outward causes, but the rock is hard in itself.

Then Flamma, having no fear of the strange flower, felt that she must take it up ; and stretching forth her hand, she plucked it by the stalk, and placed it in her cap of moleskin. Its flame-petals mingled in her golden hair, and the flower neither burned her nor singed her hair ; but while she wore it she felt cold no more, nor hungry, nor tired. The flame-flower shot forth a ray along the forest, making a narrow path of light ; and Flamma, knowing not why, followed the path ; and the wolves shrank back from the rays of the flower.

Flamma followed the path of light made by the flame-flower in her hair, and the path led back to the hut amid the swamps. In sadness she came to the hut where her mother was.

Honora sat within, her chin in her hand, her eyes fixed upon the fire of turf. Slowly she turned her cold eyes upon the girl, and said in a harsh voice, "Go hence ! Follow your father, and trouble me not."

Yet when she saw the golden flicker in Flamma's hair, her voice faltered.

Flamma threw herself at Honora's feet, stretching forth her arms, and cried "Mother!" And her cry was so sad that the wild things of the forest heard it, and ceased their chattering and calling, and were silent.

But Honora said, "I am no mother—get you hence!"

Flamma laid her head upon her mother's breast, so that the flame-flower rested over her mother's heart; and Honora's eyelids quivered, and her lip; she pressed her hand to her forehead, and passed it over her eyes; and her eyes were wet with tears for the first time for so long!

Then, as the flame-flower flickered over her heart, she broke into sobs, clasping Flamma to her, and fondling her; and so they stayed some space.

Then Honora held out Flamma from her at arm's length, gazing upon her; and she saw that the girl was pale and ill, which thing she had never perceived before that time; and Honora placed her upon the poor bed of skins, preparing meat for her.

They say a great dark wolf came to the door at that time and glared within ; and that when it saw the rays of the flower it shrank back, and so returned again into the forest, howling.

Flamma raised herself on her elbow, and said, " We must seek father."

But Honora stood in the doorway and said, " He is gone." And her voice was hard.

Flamma arose, and, taking the flower from her hair, set it in her mother's breast. Then her mother's eyes filled again with tears ; and she stretched forth her arms from the doorway toward the forest, yearningly.

Flamma said no word, but took meat and put it in a leathern bag, and hung it to her girdle, and took her mother's hand ; so they went out into the forest, the flower in Honora's breast making a path of light ; and they followed the path many days. When they were weary, Flamma would place the flower upon the ground ; and the snow would disappear, and the turf become dry, so that they could sleep. The flower warmed them, and the wolves and the serpents fled from it.

On the ninth day they found Evan. His javelin was broken, and he lay on the snow, wounded by a boar. Evan raised his eyes and saw them, and said, "Go hence, and leave me to die!"

Then, while Honora bent toward him, the flame-flower fell from her breast on to the snow between them, and the petals of flame crept towards Evan, melting all the snow between those two; and the flower touched the breast of Evan and flickered there.

Then Evan looked upon Honora, and stretched out his arms.

There Honora and Flamma made a hut of branches, and tended Evan until he was well of his wound; and he looked upon them as one does who has waked from a dream, and took them to him. Thus had the flame-flower melted the snows.

When Evan was strong again they went back to the hut among the marshes; but Flamma could walk no more, being too weak and ill; so that Evan carried her through the forest.

While Flamma lay sick in the hut, the

flame-flower, which lay always gently flickering upon her breast, fell to the floor. Honora would have picked it up to replace it ; but it escaped her hand, and crept along to the door, and so out. Then Flamma raised herself, and said—

“The flower calls us, and we must follow it. I am strong enough to walk.”

But Evan and Honora said, “It cannot be. You are too weak to go.” Yet they saw that the girl knew better than they ; so they made her a litter of boughs, and put her upon it, covering her with an awning of skins ; and carried her out. Honora took up the flower, and put it in her breast, and it cast a ray through the forest ; so they took up the litter and followed the path of the ray, travelling slowly, and resting when Honora grew weary.

One night, on their journey, when they had made a tent of boughs and put Flamma under it, and she slept, they saw the flame-flower fall to the ground ; and Evan would have picked it up ; but it burnt his fingers, so that he needs must let it go. It crept

flaming along the ground until it came to a marsh, and it crossed the marsh quickly. All around, where the marsh was firmer, were crowds of wolves; these fled from the trail of fire.

The flame-flower sped onward until it reached the foot of a tall rock like an island in the marsh; then the bright petals of the flower lengthened out, licking the rock, until they reached the foot of a castle builded upon it, many a bow's length above. The fiery petals wrapped and licked round the walls, leaping upward toward the sky until the clouds were red; the stones of the castle grew red with the heat; and the castle glowed, filled with bright fire; and in the midst, at a window, stood one who strove to escape from the flames; and it seemed to those who watched that the form of him at the window changed to that of a wolf. There went up a great howl as of a wolf; and the wolf was seen no more. Then the flames died out; the castle had fallen; and the rock it had stood upon was rent from foot to summit. Thus had the flame-flower rent

the hard rock : but Flamma knew not of it ; for when she awoke the flame-flower flickered gently on her breast.

Five days they journeyed after this ; and on the sixth they came out from the forest upon a great road that had been made by the conquerors ; and here the flower fell to the ground, and stayed still, and they waited a space.

After a while Evan lay down with his ear to the ground.

“ I hear the tramp of a great host,” he said.

Honora turned pale and said, “ Let us hasten again into the shelter of the forest ; for we are outlaws, and they who take us will kill us.”

But Flamma said : “ The flower moves not from its place. Pray, father, put your ear again to the ground ; for these can be no enemies.”

So he put his ear to the ground again, and said, “ It is the tramp of horses, and of men who step together in time ; and none do that but those from the South, whom I love. Yet they have all gone back to their own land.”

So they waited, and presently came a

legion of the conquerors from the South, marching toward the North.

First there came many horsemen in helmets of brass, and at their head a captain ; and Evan knew this captain for a friend of Licinius, and begged to speak with him.

So the captain stayed his horse, and drew aside as the legion passed by ; and Evan made known to him his own friendship with Licinius, at whose name the captain listened willingly to him ; and Evan besought succour, showing him the child who was sick.

So the captain bade two foot-soldiers bring a litter from the baggage, and place Flamma within it, and so carry her ; and other two bore Honora in another litter ; and for Evan a horse was found. So they journeyed with the legion to the town of Rataë, and there found a lodging.

For many days Evan and Honora watched by the couch of Flamma, while the flame-flower on her breast grew ever paler and smaller ; and one day, toward sunset, as they stood watching the child, Evan took Honora's hand in his, and so they stood, with their hands clasped together ; for the

pale little flame-flower was drooping, and the colour of its petals could scarce be seen.

Honora laid her head down by the child's, and hid her face in the golden hair; and Evan stood with his head low, watching the flower as it faded.

But as they watched, and could hardly see the light of the flower, it flickered a little and grew stronger; and Flamma opened her eyes and sighed.

All through the night they watched; and the flame waxed slowly brighter and brighter; till, when Eostre the dawn-goddess looked in at the window, her light could not hide the light of the flower, so greatly had it brightened; and before many days Flamma stood in the meadows without the wall of Rataë, with Evan and her mother. But the flame-flower had gone from her hair, for its work was done.



SECOND PART



minds of men were stirred with great fear and perplexity, for those that journeyed from the North told dreadful tales of how the wild men beyond the borders were thronging over the great wall of defence which the conquerors had built long ago to keep them out; and now the friendly conquerors, who had ruled and protected the land for four hundred years, had all gone.

In the hamlet of Pratulum, where were the ruins of the great house that had once been the home of Licinius, and after him of Evan, the men stood in unquiet groups, speaking uneasily of the terror which came

daily nearer to them from the North. For the men of Pratulum, and those of the whole land, were no warriors and knew not the use of arms, having grown unused to helping themselves during the long years of peace under the protection of their rulers and masters. They, and their forefathers for ages, had ploughed, and reaped, and laboured for their conquerors; but the sword they had not touched, and their hands had no skill in its use. So they came like sheep, huddled around their meeting-place, to talk in fear and foreboding; for they had no plan.

"They will come upon us, these Northern men," they murmured, "and will slay us, and our women, and our children, as the wolves slay the sheep; for they spare none!"

"If ye will be sheep, ye shall die as sheep," said a young man who held in his hand a javelin.

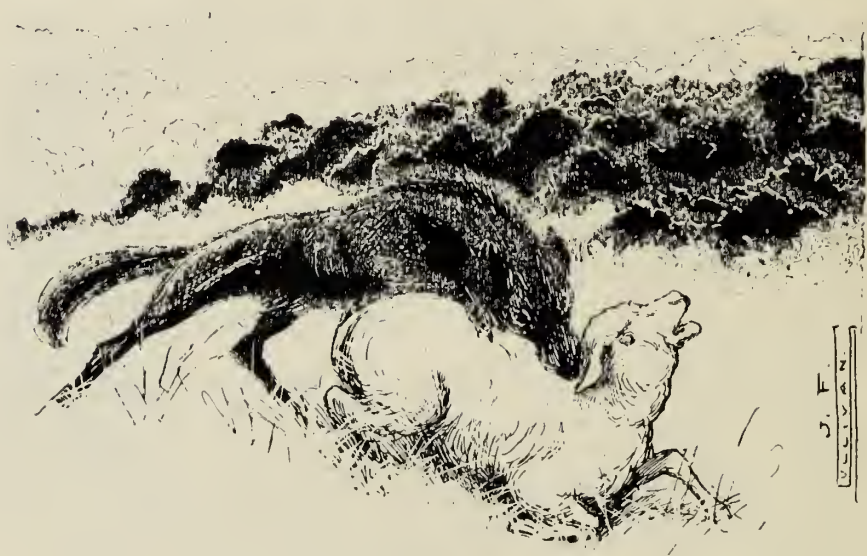
"What would you have us do, young Griffith?" they asked.

"Fight!" said the young man.

They laughed jeeringly, without mirth, saying—

“How fight? These wild men from beyond the great wall have the skill of arms, and are fierce!”

“Be ye fierce too, then,” said Griffith.



“Some among you have javelins which your masters gave you—they have slain wolves and can slay enemies; ye have knives—make spears of them; ye have bows that will slay the fox and the hare; in the forest, where the yew-trees grow, there are

greater bows that will slay these savages from the North."

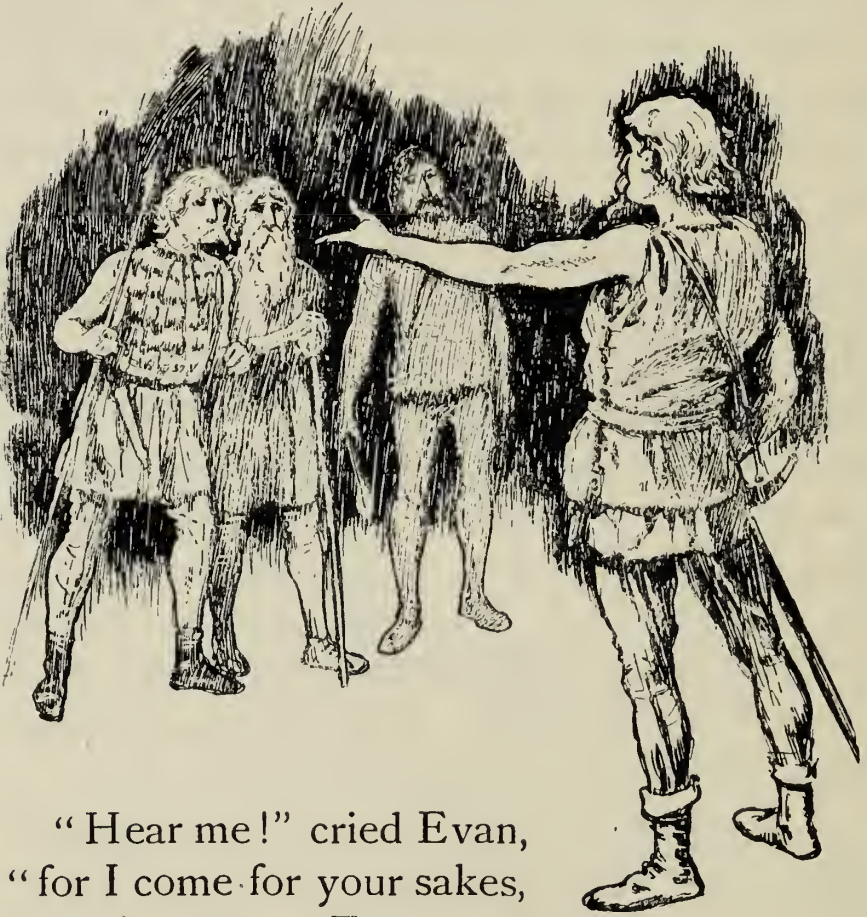
But they shook their heads, and said, "Who shall lead us?" And at that moment came the sound of a horn from the edge of the wood; and the men turned pale, and drew together whispering, "It is the men from the North!"

Now, in the days long ago (before the conquerors had come, when hamlet warred with hamlet, and all that dwelt beyond the belt of forest might be foes), it was binding upon any true man who passed the forests and so came forth into a hamlet not his own, that he should sound a horn, that those of the hamlet should be aware of his coming and that he might not steal upon them as a foe or a robber would. And this custom had fallen into disuse these many years.

A single figure broke from the wood and drew near them, till it had come within a javelin-cast, and then it halted. It was a tall and strong figure, with fair hair—it was Evan.

"It is he who herds with the evil spirits of

the forest ! It is the companion of Morddec, son of the wolf-woman," they cried ; and made as though to slay him.



"Hear me !" cried Evan, "for I come for your sakes, not mine own. Even now the wild men from the North have passed the wall of Hadrian, and draw daily nearer."

"He is in league with the Northern wolves,"

shouted the men. "Slay him!" And one who held a pruning-hook hurled it at Evan: but the young man Griffith, who had drawn near Evan, threw out his arm and stopped the weapon; and it cut his arm to the bone, and so saved Evan's head.

"He is no friend of Morddec, but his foe," cried Griffith. "He destroyed the castle of the Wolf by fire; for I was in the forest, and saw him do this thing. Has Morddec stolen upon you these seven years? Have his wolves taken your sheep? No—for he died in his castle; and Evan compassed it!"

Now Griffith had been a boy of fourteen when he had seen this sight; and he had said nought of it to the men of the settlement; for he knew their suspicion of all who went into the forest, and feared that they would drive him from among them. But now he spoke, being a man grown.

Evan tore a strip from his woollen tunic, and bound up Griffith's arm tightly; then he turned to the men of the hamlet:—

"Hear me! I had done no wrong when ye cast me out from among you, but lay

under the evil spells of Morddec—I and my wife Honora. Ye burned my good house, and took from me my sheep and my goods; and now I come among you from a place of safety—from a walled town—to save you. Will ye be slaughtered by the men of



the North, or will ye follow my word, and save yourselves?"

Then one from among them stepped forth to Evan, and another followed; then three or four more; then all sent up a shout that they would follow his word.

So Evan set them to work to cut down trees from the forest, and draw them to the



high hill where the camp of the conquerors had been; and they set up a great and strong palisade inside the ditch, upon the mound around the crown of the hill—they worked in haste. When the palisade was done, and two strong doors placed in it, Evan said—

“Bring your household goods within the palisade, and leave your homes in the valley; and build yourselves huts within the fort; and I will go and bring you weapons.”

Evan and Griffith took the great stone road, and journeyed to the town of Rataë; and there Evan procured a waggon and a yoke of oxen. Then Evan took Griffith to a house inside the town; and there lay a store of javelins, helmets, shields, and short heavy swords, which the captain of the legion had left with Evan at his entreaty.

They put the arms in the waggon; and Honora and Flamma were placed in it; and so they set out to Pratulum, Evan and Griffith walking by the oxen.

Flamma looked upon Griffith; and he was tall and strongly made, and his face was

handsome. She tended the wound in his arm that he had come by in saving Evan's life ; and she knew that Griffith was brave.

So they arrived at the camp at Pratulum, and helped the people to finish the huts ; after that they built a hut for themselves in the midst of the camp.

Evan and the young man Griffith gave out the weapons to the men, and practised them in their use, making them engage in mock fight one with another. They set up marks to cast the javelins at, and cut great bows of yew-tree from the forest, and made arrows of ash and holly, tipping them with sharp flints, in readiness for the men of the North.

When Griffith was near Flamma, she was glad ; and when he spoke to her, her heart beat with joy. One day, when Griffith brought her a golden armlet which he had found in the grass of the camp, she coloured with happiness, and could scarcely thank him.

II

ONE day Flamma (who was a tall maiden now) sat in the fringe of the forest among the birds and squirrels that came to her for food; when she saw Griffith pass a little space off, on his way to cut wood for bows and arrows. She watched him pass away out of sight; and when she turned again she saw a beautiful maiden standing by a great oak. This maiden did not perceive Flamma, for she was gazing after Griffith as Flamma herself had done. The maiden followed slowly along the way that Griffith had taken, and Flamma watched her until she had gone from sight. Flamma followed the unknown maiden, creeping silently after her along the soft green moss. When she had thus gone some way, she came upon the hillside where the yew-trees grew, and

where men had found iron in the earth ; and here she stopped suddenly, and drew back into the shadow, for Griffith was cutting bow-wood from a tree ; and a little space from him, concealed from him by the bushes, stood the unknown maiden, gazing upon him. So the two maidens stood awhile, the unknown one looking upon Griffith, and Flamma upon her.

Presently the maiden turned away ; and again Flamma followed her silently, until she saw her come to a little pool of still water in a rivulet. There the maiden bent down and gazed upon the reflection of her own face, and arranged her long brown hair, and twined young oak-leaves and flowers in it.

Flamma was filled with a great wonder who the maiden could be ; for she knew all the women of Pratulum, young and old ; and there was none among them like the unknown maiden ; for she was very lovely to look upon, having great brown eyes as soft as those of a fawn, nor was there any woman in the homesteading clad like her ;



for she wore a flowing robe like those of the women of the conquering race, only more simple than theirs, and with less colour. Her robe was of a pale greenish tint, like the shadow of a forest in spring cast upon snow; and she wore no ornaments but young oak leaves and forest flowers.

“Who are you, maiden?” Flamma asked.

“I am a hamadryad,” said the maiden, gazing at Flamma with her great brown eyes.

“Whence come you?”

“I live in the heart of this great oak. We were born together, the oak and I. When the oak dies, I shall die too.”

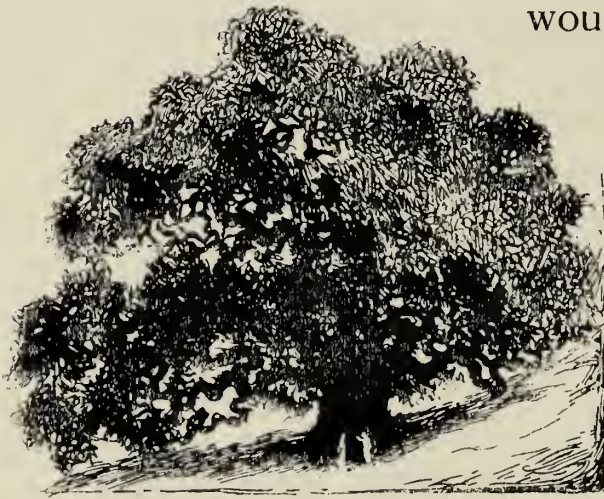
“But you are young—hardly a woman yet!” said Flamma.

“I am young—yet I have lived four hundred years,” said the maiden.

She was so fair and simple that Flamma took her hand, and stroked her brown hair. The birds and squirrels came about the hamadryad-maiden even more than about Flamma; for the maiden was one of themselves, owing her life to the forest. Flamma and she wandered hand in hand along the

glades ; and many a time after that Flamma went to the great oak and called (for Flamma had no fear of the forest, having lived in it so long as a child ; and the people of the homesteading knew her ways, and said no evil of her) ; and the hamadryad would

come forth, and so they would wander together, or sit by the pools of the rivulet : and Flamma loved the maiden.



One day she went into the forest as usual, and came upon Griffith asleep in the mossy glade

where the great oak stood.

By him tinkled the little rivulet, forming still pools here and there ; and over him stretched the arms of the great oak, shading him.

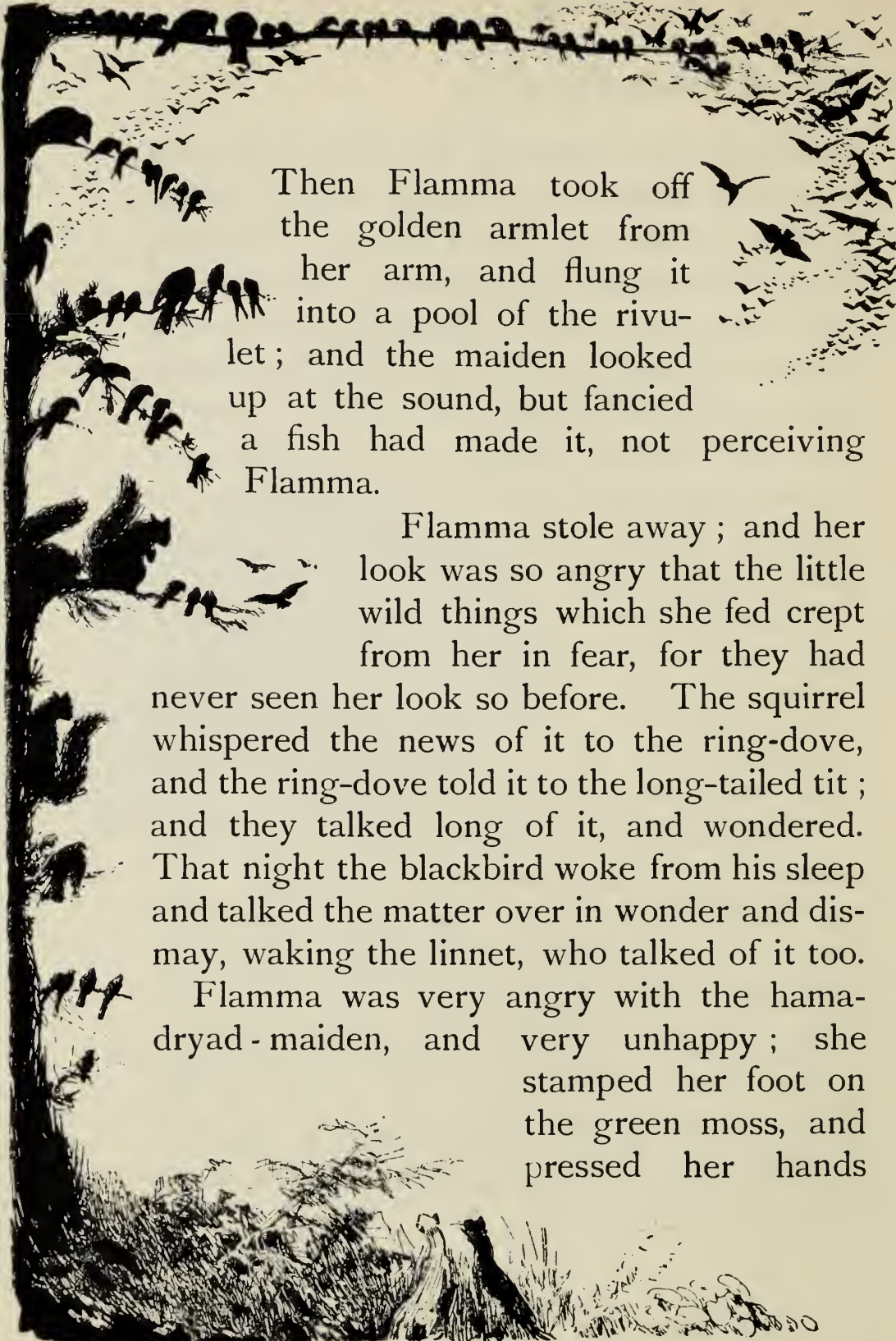
While Flamma stood near, looking upon him, she saw the unknown maiden come

out from the trunk of the oak ; nor was there any hollow in the trunk that a person might go into, so that Flamma wondered. When the maiden perceived Griffith asleep, she went to one of the still pools and arranged her hair by the reflection ; then she turned and looked earnestly at Griffith, and her hands were clasped over her breast ; and very slowly she drew near to Griffith, and sat down by him, very near, gazing at him as he slept.

Flamma turned and wandered away, dropping from her hand the wild flowers which she had gathered to deck the hamadryad-maiden's hair. Now she did not notice the little wild things that came about her.

"Is this why he comes so often into the forest?" she kept saying to herself. "Is she fairer than I? Is she fairer than I?" Then she wondered at herself, and why she asked these questions.

After that she went no more to seek the maiden ; but once again she stole to the mossy glade by the great oak, and Griffith lay asleep as before ; and the hamadryad sat by him, watching him.



Then Flamma took off the golden armlet from her arm, and flung it into a pool of the rivulet ; and the maiden looked up at the sound, but fancied a fish had made it, not perceiving Flamma.

Flamma stole away ; and her look was so angry that the little wild things which she fed crept from her in fear, for they had never seen her look so before. The squirrel whispered the news of it to the ring-dove, and the ring-dove told it to the long-tailed tit ; and they talked long of it, and wondered. That night the blackbird woke from his sleep and talked the matter over in wonder and dismay, waking the linnet, who talked of it too.

Flamma was very angry with the hamadryad - maiden, and very unhappy ; she stamped her foot on the green moss, and pressed her hands

over her eyes, making a resolve that she would never speak to Griffith again. "She is not so fair as I," she said; "yet this is why he comes so often into the forest, pretending to cut bows." No—she would never look at Griffith again; and, thinking this, she turned and went slowly back to the place where she had left him sleeping.

As she caught sight of him he was waking. The unknown maiden had wreathed around him as he slept long trails of creeping plants twined with forest flowers, and she still sat by him. Griffith woke, and looked at the maiden; and she stretched forth her hand and stroked his curling hair. But Griffith arose in wonder, as if he knew her not; and when the maiden touched his hand, he drew it away

"He quarrels with her," said Flamma to herself.

The maiden stretched forth her hand again to touch his cheek, but he put her hand away and turned from her.

"He knows her not!" said Flamma to herself.

Then Griffith took up his bow-wood and axe, and strode away ; and the maiden gazed after him with her hands clasped on her breast, and tears rolled down her cheeks.

A long time the maiden stood there gazing after him ; then her head drooped, and she wept silently.

Flamma broke from her hiding-place and stood before the hamadryad.

“ I hate you ! ” she said.

The maiden gazed at her with great round eyes, full of surprise, and sought to touch her hand ; but Flamma thrust her away.

“ Sister, what have I done ? ” asked the hamadryad.

Then Flamma flushed red with shame of herself, and covered her face with her hands : but when the maiden knelt before her, wondering at her emotion, and touching her arm gently, Flamma drew herself up and uncovered her face, and feigned to laugh.

“ He is beautiful, ” said the maiden, “ and I am lonely when he is not in the forest ; yet he has never seen me until this day. ” And she sat on the roots of the oak and sobbed ;

and the branches of the oak sighed in the breeze above.

Flamma, hating Griffith and the hamadryad, went toward home. She saw a little flicker among the bracken, and she knew it was the flame-flower, which she had not seen for so long.

As she took it up and put it in her breast, a voice seemed to say, "Place me between Griffith and thyself, and he will turn to thee."

But as the flower flickered in her breast, she stopped; then turned and hurried back to the hamadryad, finding her still sitting with drooping head upon the oak roots; and Flamma went and sat by her side, putting her arms round her; and the hamadryad gazed upon the flower with eyes like a child's.

It was nearly dark when Flamma left her and hurried toward the camp; and now she thought no more of herself, but only of the hamadryad's grief. The voice in the flower seemed to keep repeating, "Place me between Griffith and thyself."

By the edge of the wood she met Griffith coming to seek her and bring her to the

camp. "Place me between Griffith and thyself, and he will turn to thee," the flower seemed to whisper ; and Flamma stopped on the way toward him, hesitating. She took the flower, and would have cast it away, but did not ; and when she came forward, she was very pale : and she held the flower in the hand further from Griffith, and so carried it on the way home.

Once, as they came to a turn in the path, Griffith crossed over and came on that side of her where she held the flower ; and that moment he turned toward her, and gazed at her ; but she quickly took the flower in her further hand. Then she bit her lip, and could not speak for awhile.

III



OR some days after Griffith did not go into the forest ; and Flamma, wearing the flame-flower ever in her breast, thought often of the hamadryad, pitying her. Yet when, for any moment, the flower was not in her breast, she hated her. On the fifth day, Flamma went to where Griffith kept the yew-wood which he had cut for making bows, and took the branches and hid them.

Griffith, going to the place for more yew-wood, found none ; and so set forth once more into the forest to cut fresh branches. In the heat of the afternoon Flamma went silently into the forest, and so came upon Griffith sleeping in a glade ; and, as she waited concealed, the hamadryad came and

found him sleeping as she had done before, and sat down by him with her back to Flamma.

Flamma crept up and dropped the flame-flower between Griffith and the hamadryad, and stole back to her hiding-place.

Evan awoke, and saw the maiden ; she stretched forth her hand to touch his hair, and he took her hand in his, and gazed upon her ; then Flamma pressed her hand over her heart, and crept away ; and sat down and sobbed among the trees.

IV

ONE day, as Flamma stood upon the great road, a stranger came running in deadly fear.

“Save thyself,” he cried, “for the foes from the North are upon us. Hasten with me to the camp, for even now they are not two thousand paces away.”

“Haste thou to the camp and warn them,” cried Flamma ; and she plunged into the forest in the other direction.

The man gazed for a moment ; then turned, and ran again toward the camp.

As Flamma went swiftly through the underwood, she began to hear the sounds of distant shouting and yells, as of furious beasts. Then there passed her three men running for life, wounded and bleeding ; but Flamma pushed on away from the camp, toward the hillside where the yew-trees grew.

She panted wearily as she ran, and could



scarcely keep on ; but still she struggled forward, till she came to the yew-grove.

Griffith knelt there, tying together a bundle of bow-wood ; and she cried to him to flee to the camp, for the men of the North were upon them.

Even as she said it, shouts and yells sounded from the glades close at hand ; and with the shouts mingled the howling of a wolf. Then Griffith caught her up, and carried her quickly for some space ; but she felt him tiring beneath her weight, and heard the howling ever growing nearer and nearer ; and Griffith's breath grew thick beneath her weight, and he stumbled frequently.

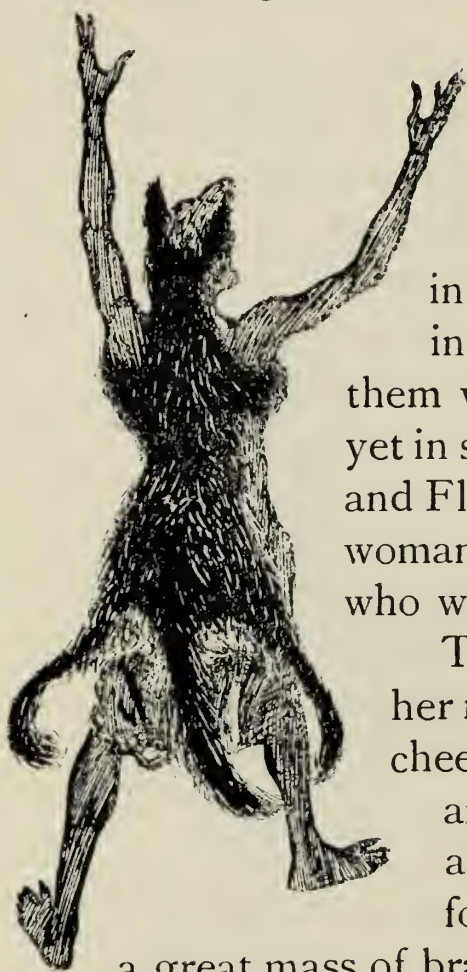
Flamma said, " Put me down, for I can run well now ; " and slipped down from his arms, and ran ahead of him into the undergrowth, straining herself to show him how fast she could run, so that she even drew away from him.

" Flamma ! " cried Griffith.

" I am ahead—I can run faster than thou," called she from the undergrowth, though she could scarce find a voice to call with.

Again he called to her ; and again she forced herself to answer—ever on ahead.

"Follow, follow!" she called; "I am ever ahead!" He could not see her, but followed, thinking she still went faster than he.



Now on the ridge of hill where the yew-trees grew she saw figures come running into sight—wild figures of men clad in skins, and with javelins in their hands; and leading them was the figure of a woman, yet in some way like that of a wolf; and Flamma knew it was the wolf-woman, the mother of Morddec who was burned in his castle.

Then Flamma called up all her remaining breath, and called cheerily once more to Griffith; and so turned suddenly aside from the way he would follow her, and plunged into a great mass of bracken, and fell down in the midst of it on her face, knowing no more for a space. But Griffith passed, running, thinking her still ahead.

Then nearer and nearer came the shouts and the howling of the wolf; and the wolf-woman and those that followed her guidance passed close to her hiding-place along the way Griffith had taken; but Flamma knew not of it, having fainted.

After some space Flamma came to herself, and arose painfully, and so crept along in the direction of the camp.

Then she was aware of the howling of the wolf once more, and of cries as of men who are hurt: so she hurried on and peered out of the brushwood to where Griffith stood at bay with his back to the great oak, and the foes from the North—seven there were—hurled their javelins at him, and struck at him with swords; the wolf-woman urging them on, and taunting them as they failed.

Three of the strangers lay already among the roots of the oak, cut down by Griffith's axe.

And Flamma saw a strange thing. Although the day was calm and still, without a breeze, yet the great arms of the oak that

stretched above Griffith waved wildly to and fro, and up and down, beating the ground beneath. So swiftly did they wave, that when any foeman hurled a javelin at Griffith some branch would swing across, so that the javelin stuck deeply into it, quivering there. Yet when Griffith raised his axe to strike, and brought it down, no branch impeded it. Then a great fellow, at a sign from the wolf-woman, slipped suddenly in while Griffith fought hard with four others, and cut at his head with his heavy sword; but swift as light a bough waved across and caught the sword, which cut deeply in and stuck there, and Griffith's axe severed the man's head from his shoulders.

Flamma broke suddenly from the brush-wood, and ran swiftly to Griffith's side—so swiftly that none barred her passage; and as she came to his side, a branch that had a javelin sticking in it bent quickly down to her; and she took the javelin, which came easily out of the branch. Then two rushed in to take her alive; but a bough swung down upon them, hurling them away fifty



paces through the air ; and they fell by the stream, and moved no more.

Flamma threw her javelin at one ; and it struck him in the foot, so that he could fight but poorly ; and Griffith slew one more ; and the two that remained whole drew off ; but the wolf-woman stood and cried, “Ye escape me for the moment ; but we go to the camp to find Evan, that slew my son in his castle ; and the men of the North shall slay him, and all his house, and all that hold to him. Honora shall die—and thou Flamma—and thou Griffith ; and my son Morddec’s spirit shall laugh in the air, for he shall be avenged !”

Then the wolf-woman howled shrilly ; and there came forth from the forest around many wolves, until the glade was but a moving mass of



them. These came with glittering white teeth toward Flamma and Griffith; and Griffith had sunk down on the oak-roots from many wounds received before he had reached the tree. Flamma crouched over him, covering him, and covered her eyes with her hand.

But when the first wolf came within reach of the tree, a bough swept down and hurled him high into the air, so that he fell afar off with a thud, and lay there; and the boughs swept the ground incessantly, or came crashing down upon the pack, crushing the wolves to the earth; so that no wolf might come within the sweep of the terrible boughs: and the ground was strewn with dead wolves in a great circle around the tree. Then the rest drew away in great fear, and disappeared into the undergrowth whence they had come.

When the wolves had gone, and the great boughs were still and silent, Flamma fetched water from a pool and bathed Griffith's wounds, and bound them up with shreds from her dress; and by them stood the hama-dryad, with the flame-flower in her breast.

And Griffith opened his eyes ; and his eyes sought the face of the hamadryad ; and Flamma turned her face away to hide it.

Griffith was weak from his wounds ; but a faint clamour arose from the distant camp upon the hill, and he sprang up and seized his axe and a javelin.

“ I must go to them,” he cried, “ for I hear the horn of Evan thy father calling me.” Flamma sprang up too, to go with him.

“ Rest thou here, for thou wouldst be of no avail, and thy peril would fetter my arm.”

And the maiden laid hold on Flamma, and held her back. “ He is right,” said the hamadryad.

So Griffith made what haste he could for his wounds, and came out from the edge of the forest, hurrying to the camp. When he came within sight of it, he saw a great host of the Northern men seething round the palisades, and the wolf-woman urging them on. She turned and saw Griffith afar off, and shrieked loud and long ; and at the signal the wolves came forth from the forests, and set upon Griffith ; but he

The Flame-Flower

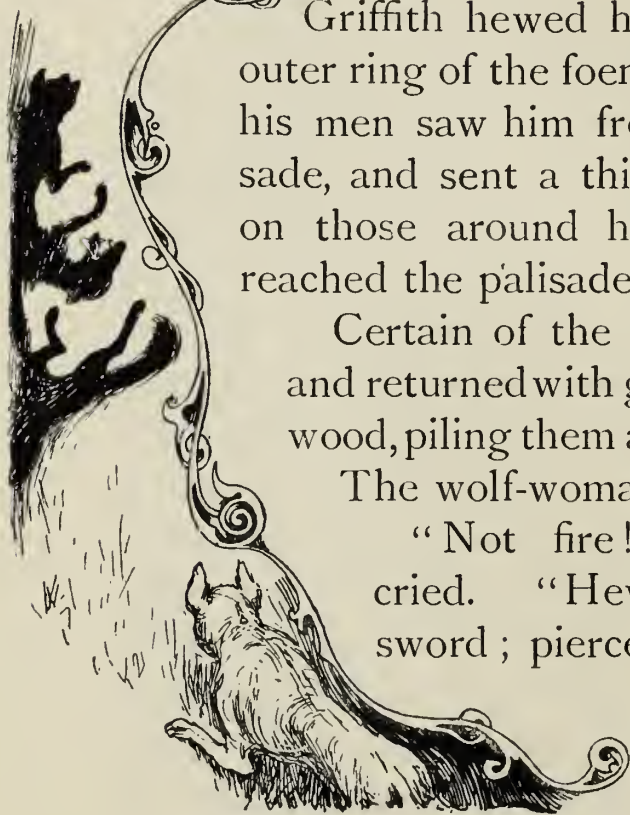
hewed them down with his axe on all sides, until he had made a wall of dead wolves around him. Then he ran, turning at each few paces to hew them down, until the few remaining slunk back to the forests in fear.

Griffith hewed his way through the outer ring of the foemen ; and Evan and his men saw him from within the palisade, and sent a thick flight of arrows on those around him ; so that Evan reached the palisade and climbed over.

Certain of the besiegers drew off, and returned with great loads of brushwood, piling them against the palisade.

The wolf-woman ran to them.

“Not fire! Not fire!” she cried. “Hew them with the sword ; pierce them with the javelin ; beat down the palisade — but not fire!”



"Why not fire, mother?" said the leader of the Northern men.

But she only shrieked "Not fire!" For the wolves fear the fire.

"If ye use fire, by fire ye shall yourselves be consumed," she cried. But they kindled the heap of brushwood; and the palisade blazed up and a gap was made.

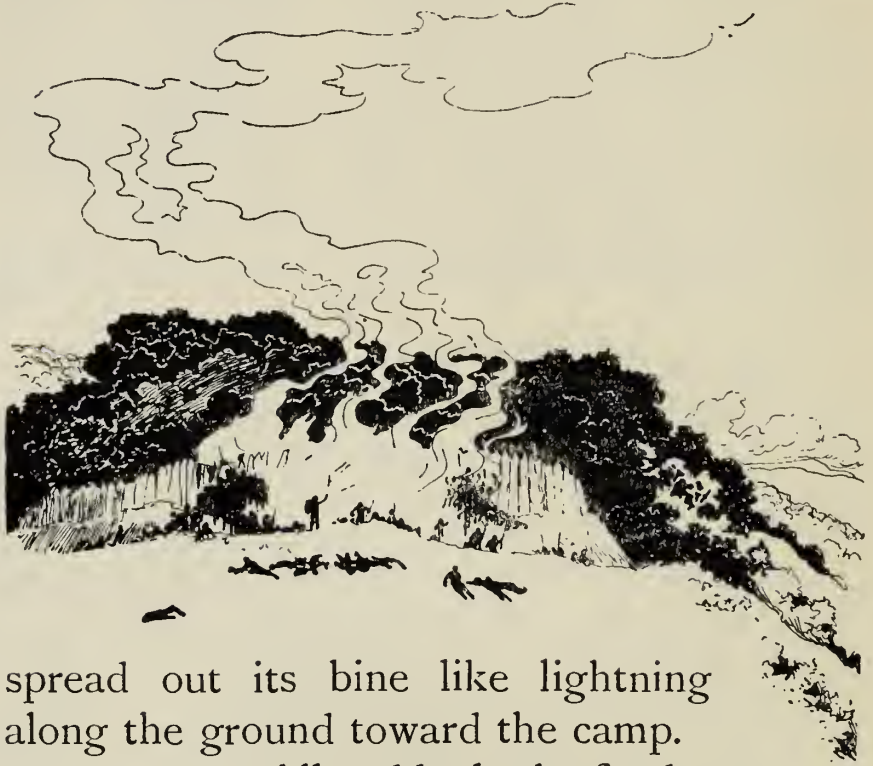
Evan and Griffith stood in the gap, the fire scorching their faces, and hewed down the Northmen as they rushed on to enter; but the fire-breach widened and widened, and a double line of Evan's men stood in it, keeping back the foemen from the gap; and as the gap widened the line lengthened.

But Evan's men fell by threes and fours, until two score had fallen; and Evan and Griffith, with the one score of their men who were left, set their backs to the huts within the palisade, and fought on.

Then Evan fell; and Griffith stood over him, fighting on with his axe.

Flamma crept forth from the edge of the forest, unseen by the besiegers, a javelin in

her hand and the flame-flower on her breast ;
and the flame-flower fell to the ground and



spread out its bine like lightning
along the ground toward the camp.



All suddenly the fire burst
from a point of the burning pali-
sade in great forks along the
earth toward the Northmen, licking
round their feet.

“The fire! the fire!” cried the
wolf-mother ; “I warned you of it.
By the fire ye shall perish.”

The Northmen backed from the darting flames; but the flames came at them from every point of the palisade, surrounding them, but leaving a free circle round Griffith and Evan and their men. One after another the foemen fell, choked by the scorching heat; then they that remained fled headlong down the steep hill, the darting vines of fire pursuing them, making a network of lightning on the turf. And the Northern men fled to return no more to that place; and these told the tale to their fellows, so that after that no foeman came near that place within the lifetime of a man. All the rest of the land was overrun and devastated by them, and by others from the island to the west; but they came no more to Pratulum.

The wolf-mother had gone too. Some said she fell amid the flames; some said she fled away into the dark forests, but no man knows.

Evan arose no more.

For many days Honora and Flamma tended Griffith, who was nigh unto death; and those who saw him said, "He has met

the death-goddess, and looked upon her face."

But one day he opened his eyes feebly, and he lived.

When he was past danger, but still weak, a terrible hurricane came across the high hill, and swept away the hut in the midst of the burned camp where he lay; and he and the women had no shelter.

The dark forests moaned in the hurricane, and the tall trees rocked and swayed.

"Let us go into the thick of the forest for shelter," said Flamma, "for the wind will be less there."

So they helped Griffith to walk down the hill, and came slowly into the forest; and while they rested, Flamma being a little apart from them, the flame-flower sprang up at her feet, and a voice seemed to say to her, "Place me between Griffith and thee, and he will turn toward thee."

But she shook her head sadly, and would not take it up, although it spread its tendrils about her foot, as if persuading her.

Then she thought, "It is the hama-

dryad's: I will take it to her;" and so took it up, but keeping it always in the hand further from Griffith.

So they came presently out into the glade



of the great oak: and Flamma looked, and saw that the great oak had fallen before the hurricane, and lay uprooted.

Then Flamma knew that the hamadryad was dead.

And Flamma, weeping, took the flame-flower, and placed it in a crevice of the bark, and so left it flickering there.

They made a roof of branches, when the hurricane had abated a little more, among the limbs of the fallen oak ; and there Griffith lay until he was stronger, Evan's remaining men hunting food for them all.

One day, when Griffith was strong, he and Flamma leaned against the fallen oak ; and Griffith saw the flame-flower flickering in the crevice of the bark, and took it up ; for he knew of the flame-flower ere this, but knew not all its powers, yet only those of its might and fury.

Flamma watched his face as he took up the flower, and her eyes filled with tears.

"The maiden—she whose tree fought for us and saved our lives—is gone," she said.

Griffith looked sad, but said no word.

Flamma waited. "He will ask whither she has gone, that he may follow her," she thought. But he did not ask.

"She is gone hence," said Flamma.



“I am sorry,” said Griffith; “for she saved our lives, and was good and sweet.”

“She is dead!” said Flamma. “She saved thy life!”

“She saved my life once,” said Griffith, “but thou didst save it thrice. Yet did the maiden do more than thou hast, for she saved *thy* life, Flamma—to me.”

Flamma looked away from him, and he took her hand in his. She drew it away, saying, “The oak-maiden is dead, Griffith, my brother.”

But Griffith took her hand again in his, Flamma looking all the time away from him.

“Put the flower from between us; take it in thy further hand,” said Flamma.

“The flower is not between us,” said Griffith.

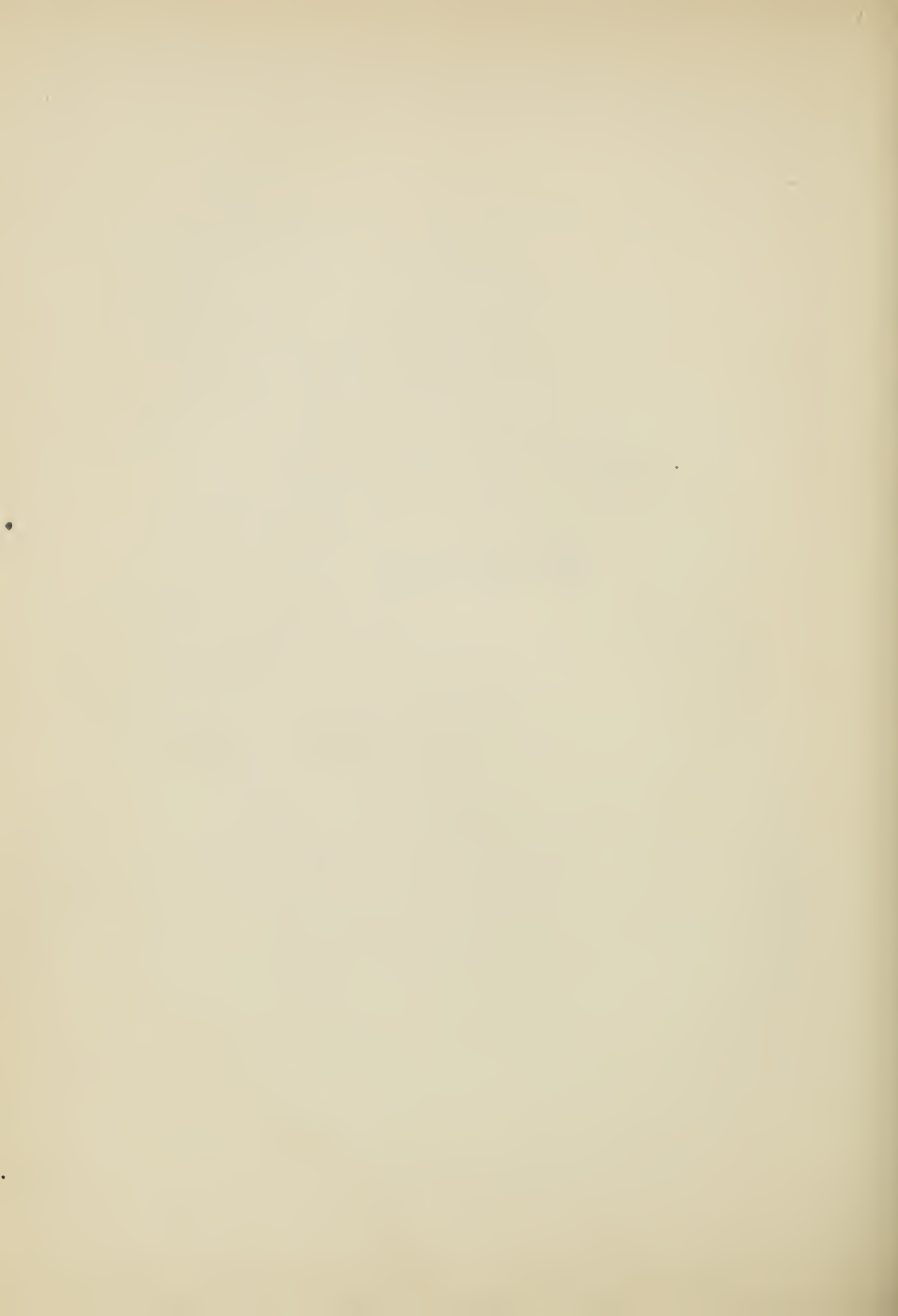
“But it has been,” said Flamma.

“Nay, it has not,” answered Griffith, “for I have held it all the while in my further hand.”

“Cast the flower from thee, Griffith,” said Flamma: and he did so, and took her hand again in his; and she left her hand in his.

Old

Primrose



Old Primrose

IN the village of Low Downbury lived a dreadfully ugly old man named Primrose. When a great friend of his, who had not seen him since he was a baby of one year old, caught sight of him at the age of eighty-five, he did not recognise him. "This can't be my old friend Primrose!" he exclaimed, "because my old friend Primrose, the very last time I saw him, was quite pink and smooth, and this person is quite soot-coloured, and all over wrinkles!" And his old friend would not have anything to do with him.

I have merely told you this to show how ugly old Primrose was.

One day in the spring time, Daisy Tinkler, a little girl who lived in the village, was gather-

ing primroses, when she came suddenly upon the old man sitting on a bank under a hedge, with his toes in the grass.

“How dreadfully ugly you are!” exclaimed Daisy (very rudely). “You are not a bit like a primrose!”

Now this information was a great shock to the old man, and rankled deeply in his mind. He only said, “You don’t see me in the right light just here, and can’t judge,” pretending not to care. But as a matter of fact he *did* care; for he had always had a sort of notion that he *was* something like a primrose, his mother having told him so at the age of one; and this really accounted for his habit of sitting under a hedge with his toes in the grass.

He tried hard, when Daisy had gone away, to look more like a primrose; he held up his hands in the position of leaves, and tried to sit in a group like primroses do: but his belief was really shattered, and he got up moodily and went home.

All night he lay awake, brooding over what Daisy Tinkler had said; and next morning he went and laid an information with the



Village Council against Daisy, accusing her of having slandered him, and injured his reputation : and the Council met, and ordered the village policeman to arrest Daisy Tinkler and imprison her in the pound until they had passed judgment.

When all the evidence was prepared the Village Council met. Daisy entered several pleas to the effect that she had never seen the old man ; and that when she saw him she did not say a word to him ; and that the words she said to him were justifiable and true in substance and in fact ; and that old Primrose did not exist, and therefore could not be injured by what she had said.

You see, this is the way they always plead in the High Courts of Justice ; for where you have law you *must* have common-sense, all law being founded upon common-sense. If your father is a solicitor or a judge, just ask him ; and he will tell you that I am right, although it's a great secret.

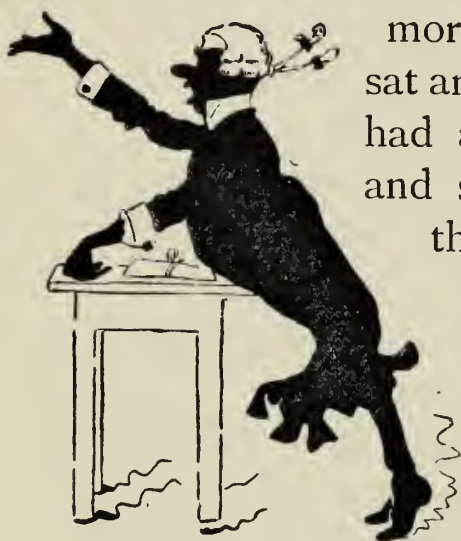
Well, the great point the Village Council had to consider was whether Daisy's words were justifiable ; and to that end they called

old Primrose before them, to decide whether he *was* like a primrose or not.

They arranged a little bank of grass in the court, and placed some twigs behind it to represent a hedge; but old Primrose's barrister objected that that was not a fair test,

because his client always looked more like a primrose when he sat among trees. So the Council had a number of trees brought and set up in court; and then the barrister insisted on the floor being covered with moss and bracken; and this was done.

Then old Primrose sat down in the moss under the bracken, and covered his toes with grass, and spread out his hands like leaves, and tried hard to sit in a group and look butter-coloured; and his barrister asked the Council to go to the further corner of the room and look at his client with one eye shut and their heads sideways.



One of the Council—the cobbler—fancied he *did* see some resemblance to a primrose when he nearly shut his eyes ; but the other two members—the hedger-and-ditcher, and the tinker—did not agree with him. They adjourned the case to think it over, and finally decided that old Primrose was *not* like a primrose, except in the colour of the whites of his eyes. So he had to pay his own costs, and Daisy Tinkler was set at liberty.

II

Now this had a very great effect upon the old man's mind; he went home brooding about it; and on his way he met a beautiful butterfly.

He watched this butterfly for some time; and then he exclaimed, "I *will* be like something beautiful! If they won't let me be like a primrose I will snub them all by being so like a butterfly that they will not know I'm not one; and then I can laugh at them!"

You see old Primrose was very revengeful!

So he followed the butterfly and observed its ways; and when nobody was looking he tried to copy them. He poked two little sticks into the pockets of his coat-tails to stiffen them out like wings, and made two little wisps of his hair stand up to look like antennæ.

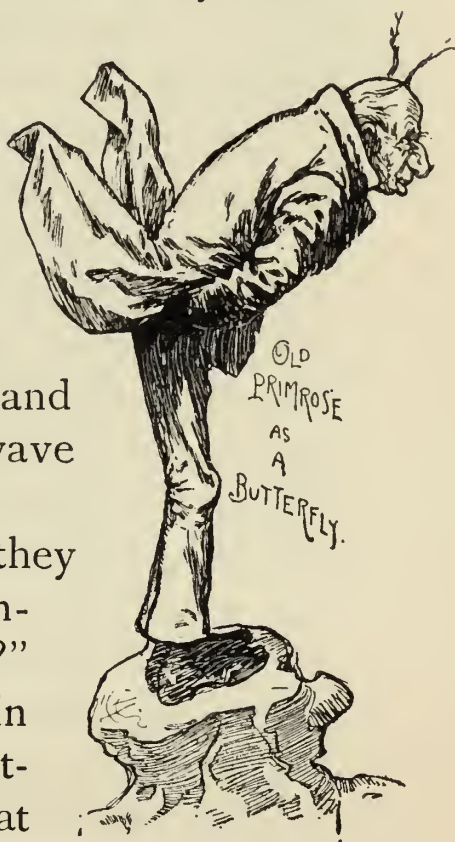
His great fault was conceit; and this carried him away now: for, seeing some of the village boys coming along from school, he decided to impose upon them by making them believe him to be a butterfly, although he had not yet practised the part half enough, and was unprepared for a public rehearsal.

So he stood on a stump, made his coat-tails tremble, and let the two wisps of hair wave in the breeze.

But as the boys passed by they said, "Hullo, there's old Primrose—what's he doing *now*?"

"They recognise me in spite of the disguise," muttered the old man in great disappointment; and he perceived that if the thing was to be done at all it must be done thoroughly.

He would have to begin at the beginning, and carry the thing through.



So he went to the lending library, and asked for a natural history book.

"What subject do you want?" asked the librarian.

Old Primrose was too artful to divulge his great secret like that. He wasn't going to say "Butterfly" and give himself away; so he said "Butter."

"There isn't anything about butter in the natural history," said the librarian. Then old Primrose tried "buttons"; but that wouldn't do either. However, they gave him the volume with "B" in it, which was what he required.

Very eagerly he trotted home and looked out "butterflies"—and it referred him to "moths"; so he doddered back to the library, and pretended the subject he wanted was "mottled soap."

"No 'mottled soap' in the natural history," said the librarian; but he was tired of old Primrose, and gave him the volume containing the M's.

Then the old man set to work to study the subject deeply, and discovered that

the butterfly is first an egg, then a small maggot, then a larger maggot, then a grub, and finally a butterfly.

"I must begin at the beginning, and come out of an egg," old P. reflected.

For this time he meant to do the thing thoroughly.

So he set to work to study coming out of eggs; he went and crawled under the hay-stack where Jane the hen was hatching out a brood, and watched little Zedekiah, the eldest chicken, emerge from the shell.



"Would you mind repeating that?—I didn't quite catch it," said old Primrose.

The new chick smiled, and got in again and repeated it.

"Haven't *quite* got the hang of it yet," said old P. "If it *wouldn't* give you too much trouble——"

"Not at all—quite delighted, I'm sure," said the obliging chick, doing it again.

"Are you thinking of getting hatched, Mr. Primrose?" asked Jane the hen politely.



“Well, ma’am—ah—in a kind of general way of speaking—yes.” You see old P. was very cunning: he allowed her to think that he contemplated being hatched as a chick. He chuckled a long time at his own deepness.

“But how to get an egg big enough for me!” mused old P. Then he called again on Jane the hen.

“I’m sorry to trouble you again, ma’am,” he said; “but—if I don’t interrupt you—I’m very anxious to have your advice.”

“Pray come in, Mr. Primrose,” said Jane.

“Well, ma’am, I was going to ask you whether—when you had half-an-hour to spare—you could manage to lay an egg large enough for me to get into.”

“Well now, dear me!” said Jane, “that’s quite a new idea to me. If you’ll just show me how small you can curl up, I might think it over. Well, I really don’t know—I’m very bad at calculation—my poor mother always was.

Now I’ve no doubt, if we asked Mr. Rooster my husband, *he* would know.

He is very clever—I really think there's nothing he doesn't know. Rooster!"

"What is it, my dear?" said Rooster the cock; "you mustn't keep me—I've a train to catch—very important business! . . . Eh—egg big enough for Mr. Primrose—dear me, dear me! No—I really feel that the strain on your mind would be too great. You want rest.

"I assure you she worries herself so," he said, turning to old P. "And the servants are such a trouble. Tell you what though—we might collect all the cast-off eggs from under this stack; and there's little Zedekiah's—he will not require it any more; and—here, you youngsters, aren't you getting up yet?" Here Mr. Rooster tapped at all the eggs in the nest; and there was a chorus of "All right, pa—out in a minute or two."

So old P. collected a great many broken eggs, and, sticking the pieces together with stamp-edging, made himself a magnificent egg, large enough to creep into; then he neatly closed up the hole from in-

side, and was completely shut in; then he waited.

He was waiting for little Daisy Tinkler to come by from school; for he was determined to convince her above every one else. He owed her a grudge, you know.

He had left a little eye-hole to look out of; and presently he perceived Daisy coming along.



When she was close by old Primrose, inside the egg, called out, "Look out for the caterpillar!"

Daisy, of course, could not make out whence the voice came;

but she stopped, and noticed the great egg.

"Stand by there!" shouted old Primrose, poking his head through the shell and emerging.

Now this time he had really prepared the thing well. He had mixed some white-wash with some of the green colour which people use for tinting the glass of green-

houses, and had painted his clothes with it; then he had dabbed brown spots all along the back, and had painted his bald head black; so he really looked exactly like a caterpillar unless one peered into him and detected his spectacles, and boots, and so on.

“What a great caterpillar!” exclaimed Daisy Tinkler; “and how ugly it is—why, it’s quite like old Mr. Primrose.”

Now this remark rather troubled old P., for he could not feel certain whether Daisy was really deceived, or whether she recognised him and was poking fun at him.

However, he threw himself into the part, and crawled slowly on his waistcoat to the cabbage-bed, and all over the cabbages, biting pieces out. There was one thing which caused him great regret—he could not for the life of him recollect what sort of noise a caterpillar makes—whether it grunts, or croaks, or squeaks, or hoots.

So he tried little short jerky grunts, and looked out of the corner of his eye to see how Daisy took it. He fancied Daisy

seemed surprised to hear a caterpillar grunt, so he changed the sound and tried little squeals; and he fancied she found this all right, and kept to it.

Daisy, after watching him for a long time, went away apparently quite satisfied.

So old P. was delighted with his success, and determined to carry the thing through properly; for he began to believe that he might become a real, proper, natural butterfly in the end, if he went through all the processes all right.

That night he slept under a very large cauliflower; and at daylight he was up again, and crawling all over the vegetables. Daisy came to look at him again, and appeared to be quite deceived; and old P. chuckled.

III

Now comes the sad part of this story—the duplicity of George, old Primrose's pig.

George had keenly observed all old P.'s doings for some time past, and had put two and two together, checking off the result on his four pettitoes, with his tail as a marker.

George was perfectly aware that the great caterpillar was no real genuine caterpillar, but old Primrose in disguise; for George had looked underneath him when pretending to grub up artichokes, and had observed his silk watch-guard and his spectacles, and knew that caterpillars never wear such things.

But George pretended to fully believe that it was a real caterpillar—and why?

Why, because he was a very dishonour-

able and worldly-minded pig, and desired to slip into old Primrose's place, become owner of the little cottage and garden-patch, and wear old P.'s hats and red Sunday waist-coat.

So the next time that Daisy came along to look at old P., George strolled casually up, and remarked in an airy manner—

“That's a very fine caterpillar, miss!”

“I'm not quite sure it *is* a caterpillar,” said Daisy.

“Why, my dear child,” said George. “Bless my soul! Why not?”

“Well, it has boots on,” said Daisy.

“Certainly! Very common thing among caterpillars of that species,” replied George. “Quite usual. Don't you see, caterpillars have to live in very damp places, and it's necessary to have pretty stout boots to keep the feet dry—quite indispensable. I knew a caterpillar once—very dear friend of mine—who neglected this precaution and caught a severe chill. Carried him off in twelve hours. Very sad!” and the pig hid his face in the swill-tub to hide his emotion.

“But where is old Mr. Primrose?” asked Daisy doubtfully.



“Eh? What, old P.? Oh, gone away—very important business. Probably won’t be back for years—years. In fact, he asked

me as a favour, before he started, to look to things in his absence."

You see George was artfully clearing the way for himself.

Old Primrose now decided that the right time had come for him to turn into a grub; so he lay down quite still on the garden seat, having covered himself with great cabbage-leaves. He gave his mind to trying to shrink and turn a dirty brown all over.

Daisy came from time to time, and turned up a corner of a cabbage-leaf, to see how he was getting on.

"Mustn't disturb him too much just now," remarked George the pig, casually strolling up. "Very critical time with caterpillars. Need complete repose and quiet."

Nevertheless Daisy, being inquisitive, could not resist the temptation to go and peep daily at old P.; and now old P. had another trouble—he had neglected to inquire what sort of noise grubs make. He knew that the sound would not be likely to be the same as that made by the caterpillar; and it occurred to him that the grub, being in a



torpid condition, would most probably snore ; so, to increase the deception, whenever he heard Daisy's footstep on the path, he would begin to snore loudly.

"That shows he's getting on all right, you know," remarked George the pig.

Suddenly, in the middle of the night, a very disturbing thought occurred to old P. as he lay under the cabbage-leaves—Did butterfly grubs wrap themselves up in cocoons? He could not remember what the natural history had said about that ; and, as he had returned the book to the lending library, it was not convenient to go and borrow it again ; besides, time pressed.

So he got up and scratched his head, and finally decided that, as silkworms made cocoons, it would be better to make one and chance it.

He therefore went very quietly out of the garden in the darkness, and crept to the general shop kept by Miss Pupsey. Pushing aside the catch of a window, he got in and entered the shop. He went straight to the shelf where the skeins of worsted

were kept, very quietly struck a match, and chose all the yellow worsted he could find; but just as he was making for the window to get out his head knocked down a ham and a string of onions from the ceiling, and these things knocked down a great bundle of baking-tins and coffee-pots hanging on the wall; all these things and a lot of spades and brooms went down crash into a tin bath, and made a frightful noise.



Miss Pupsey woke up, and screamed, and lighted a candle, and rushed into the shop, where old P. stood scratching his head in great perplexity whether it would be

better to pretend to be a caterpillar or appear as himself. She did not give him time to decide.

“Oh—help! Why—good gracious! Well I never! If it isn’t Mr. Primrose!” she cried. “Oh, however could you, Mr. Primrose, and

me so nervous too! Whatever on earth *are* you at in my shop at this time of night?"

"Well, ma'am," stammered old P., "the fact is I lost my way, as you may say, and fancied I was in my own house; and I'd left my umbrella here, you see, besides feeling a bit hungry like, and your cheese always being so good——"

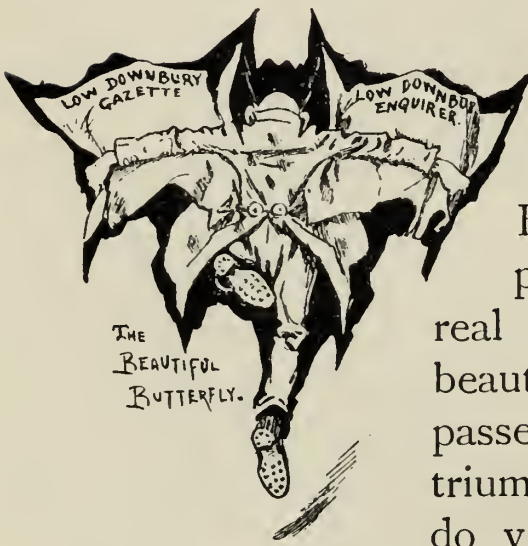
"But worsted isn't cheese, Mr. Primrose! And whatever on earth is the matter with your clothes—all green, with great brown spots?"

"The mud, ma'am; the mud," replied old P. "Very muddy down my way, and splashes so!" Then he broke down, and told Miss Pupsey the whole truth; and she, being good-natured, promised not to say a word about his plans to anybody.

Old Primrose went home and wound himself up in the yellow worsted until he could not be seen, and then lay down again on the garden seat, under the cabbage-leaves; and when Daisy came in the morning, on her way to school, to peep at him, there he was in a yellow cocoon!

Old P. had prepared himself properly for the part; he had painted his clothes all white with whitewash, and dabbed pretty pink dots here and there; and under his arms he had two newspapers for wings.

As Daisy looked on, he pushed his way out of the cocoon and began fluttering the newspapers, and hopping about all over the garden on one toe.



By this time he was quite persuaded that he was a real butterfly, and extremely beautiful; and whenever he passed Daisy he called out triumphantly, "Yah! What do you think now? Who's ugly now, eh?"

"I *don't* believe it's a real butterfly," said Daisy Tinkler, greatly puzzled.

"Dear me, miss, you take a lot of convincing," remarked George the pig.

"But he has great bunions, just like old Mr. Primrose has," said Daisy.

“Common thing in butterflies,” said the pig. “Shows breeding, doesn’t it, ma’am?” This was to Jane the hen, who had come out from under the haystack to see what was happening.

“Bunions?” said Jane reflectively. “Dear me—now you come to speak of it—I *do* seem to fancy I’ve noticed—; but there, what with the children and what with the servants, I really can’t recollect a thing. But Mr. Rooster would know—he knows everything; and I believe butterflies and bunions are two of his particular studies. Rooster!”

“What *is* it, my dear? You really must *not* detain me—train to catch—particular engagement with Jones the barn-owl at the bank. Eh? Bunions? Oh dear yes—common occurrence—common occurrence. Mr. George is perfectly right—ah, good-day to you all!”

“Butterfly? Why, of course; that’s all right,” said Mary Ann Dabbles, the Aylesbury duck, waddling up. “Many a butterfly *I’ve* eaten, and very good they are as a relish before meals. I’ll eat this one.”

And she laid hold of old Primrose's toe;
and old P., believing himself a real butterfly,



struggled to escape in a great fright, and
fluttered his wings wildly.

"Help! Police! Take her off!" he
screamed.

“There! I’m *sure* butterflies don’t call out ‘Police!’” said Daisy.

“Well, now you come to mention it,” said Jane the hen, “I don’t believe I ever *did* hear—but Mr. Rooster——”

“Take my word for it,” said George the pig. “That’s just what butterflies *do* call out—sort of war-cry, you know.”

“And keep on taking snuff?” said Daisy.

“Why, certainly,” said George. “That’s what they’re always looking for in the flowers.”

By this time old Primrose had escaped from Mary Ann Dabbles by flying on to a stump; and there he stood taking snuff in great agitation and excitement.

IV

Now while old Primrose was trying to become a butterfly, George the pig was trying just as hard to become old Primrose. He went quietly into the house, where no one could watch him, and practised walking on his hind legs and taking snuff, like old Primrose.

When he had done this for some time, and really grown very proficient at it, he stole upstairs and dressed himself in some of old P.'s clothes, particularly the red Sunday waistcoat ; and looked at himself in the little scrap of looking-glass, practising all old P.'s actions and gestures.

Now, fortunately for George, he really did naturally resemble old P. in several respects : their noses were a good deal alike, and also their eyes. Then George

had a base voice, not altogether unlike old P.'s, and there were other points of resemblance.

So when George the pig had practised until he was really very difficult to distinguish from old P., except by an expert who had been regularly apprenticed to the profession, he came downstairs in old P.'s clothes and swaggered out at the back door.

"Why, here *is* old Mr. Primrose, I declare," exclaimed Daisy, who was passing. "Good morning, Mr. Primrose ; I'm so glad you've come back."

George the pig took a great pinch of snuff, winced as though his bunions hurt him, and said—

"Little girls should not speak until they are addressed."

Now the real old Primrose, who had just tried to perch on a twig and had broken it and fallen on his nose, witnessed all this, and was very angry.

"How *dare* you pretend to be me and take my place?" he screamed to George.

"I *won't* lose my cottage and things. I'll have the law on you."

"Pretend to be *you*, Mr. Butterfly?" replied George. "Bless my soul! never thought of such a thing. As if *I* would condescend to be a dirty little butterfly, with no vote! Butterflies should know their place, and not be impertinent."

Old Primrose tried to shake off his butterflydom and draw himself up; but it was too late—he was really turning into an actual butterfly. And this shows what hard wishing and vivid imagination can do! He was growing hourly smaller and lighter (although he was not yet light enough to sit on a thin twig), and his newspaper wings were turning into real wings, as white as snow, and his feet and hands were disappearing. He had longed to be a beautiful butterfly, and had longed so hard that he was turning to one; and now he regretted it.

He hurried off to the court to take out a summons against George the pig for illegally taking possession of his cottage and garden;



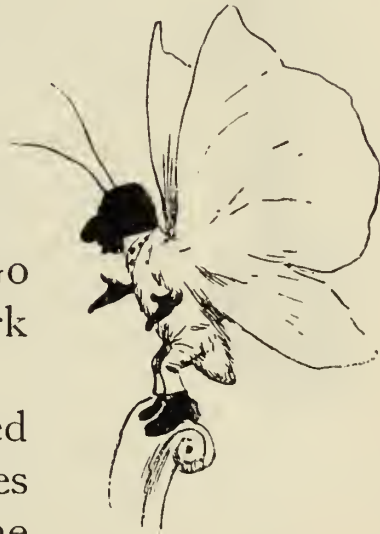
but the clerk stared at him as he fluttered in at the door and settled on the back of a chair.

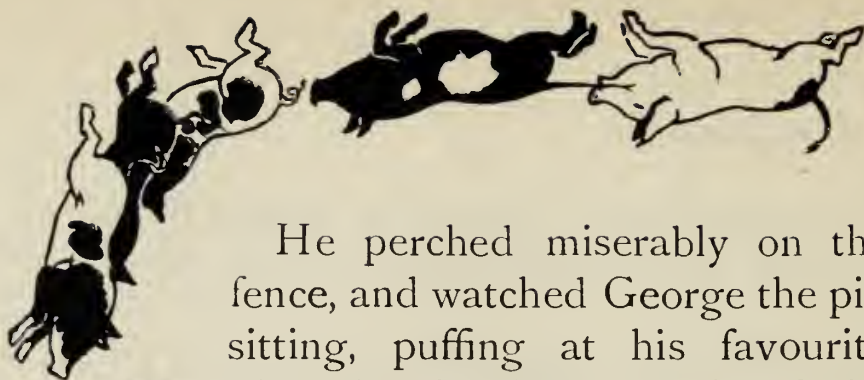
"We don't issue summonses to butterflies," said the clerk. "I suppose you *are* a butterfly, aren't you?"

"No—no—no!" screamed old P. "I'm Jacob Primrose, the owner of a cottage and garden patch. They're robbing me!"

"Pooh!" said the clerk. "Go away, or I'll stick you on a cork with a pin."

So poor old Primrose fluttered out, weeping and taking pinches of snuff by turns; and now he was changing more rapidly than ever, so that by the time he reached his cottage again he was only about five times the size of any ordinary butterfly. The strange part of it was, that he still retained his deep husky voice and his great nose, and took snuff, and felt pains in his bunions.





He perched miserably on the fence, and watched George the pig sitting, puffing at his favourite pipe, in the little porch of the cottage.

George the pig was growing every moment more and more like old Primrose; he had grown a stubbly beard, and his ears had got almost like old P.'s; and he was developing toes on his feet, and bunions on his toes.

And one day as Daisy Tinkler was trotting home from school a poor little ordinary-sized butterfly, which was being pursued by a boy with a cap, alighted on her finger.

"Daisy," it said in a gruff husky voice, "save me! They're



MASTER
HENRY.



MRS GEORGE
PORKSON
AND FAMILY
AT HOME
TEA & MUSIC
R.S.V.P.

C.H.C.C.

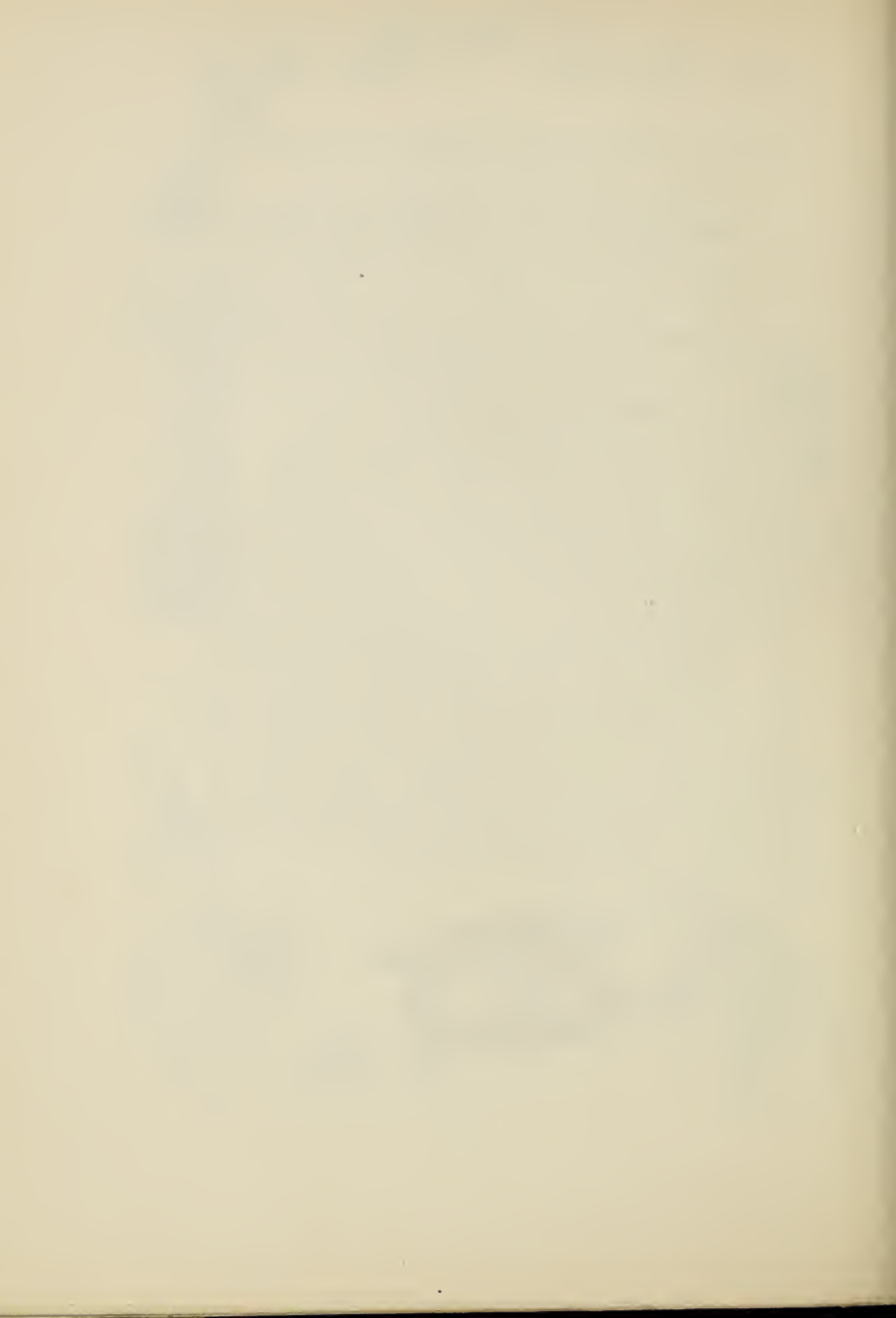
going to stick a pin through me and put me in a case."

And the poor butterfly began taking snuff and weeping bitterly ; so that Daisy knew it was poor old Primrose.

So she took him gently home on her finger, and made a little bower of twigs and flowers in her room for him to live in ; and there he sat and grumbled at his fate.

But by degrees he left off grumbling, and lost his voice, and ceased to take snuff ; and then he grew quite contented and happy, following Daisy all about the garden, and perching on the flowers ; but he never wandered away from Daisy for long at a time. And when he wanted rest he would perch on Daisy's hair and sit there. He was just an ordinary butterfly. And when the winter came, he drooped his wings and died in her hand ; and she put him on a piece of velvet in a little box with a glass lid ; and it is on her mantelpiece to this day.







BOB

ROBINSON'S
BABY

J. F.
SULLIVAN

Bob Robinson's Baby

BOB ROBINSON the cock-robin was always inclined to be a little pretentious.

Before he was fully fledged he thrust his hands beneath his coat-tails, stood with his legs wide apart on the edge of the nest, put his head a-one-side, and remarked—

“Hum! Yes, a very decent sort of garden. Mould looks rich, and promises worms. Cherry-trees I see—and currant-bushes—yes. Wants a few alterations here and there; but very fair—very fair.”

From that moment he never took his hands from under his coat-tails. Just go



BOB
ROBINSON
AS
A
CHILD.

into the garden and look at the robin, and see whether he isn't always standing with his hands thrust under his coat-tails—always standing with his legs wide apart, on the hearthrug as it were, bullying everybody. Is he not? Yes. What did I tell you?

Well, even as a youngster, he irritated everybody who came across him by his bouncible ways. The thrush and the black-bird used to talk him over between themselves, in the ash-tree; and it might have done him good to overhear the remarks.

Among other things, he insisted on everybody addressing him as "Mr." When any one merely said "Robinson," he took no notice except to glare. He was really insufferable.

He grew up and took a wife, and built a snug detached nest in the ivy; but common ivy would not do for him; *his* nest had to be in the variegated ivy.

"But consider the expense of keeping up so much show," said Mrs. Bob Robinson; "ought we not to begin more quietly, in a less pretentious neighbourhood—the plain ivy where the hedge-sparrow's villa is?"

"The hedge-sparrow, woman!" said Bob, with the most withering contempt. "Am I—R. Robinson, Esquire—to live next door to a hedge-sparrow? You'll be suggesting a semi-detached nest next, with the common soot-coloured sparrow for a neighbour!"

"But the hedge-sparrow has a blue egg," put in Mrs. Robinson.

"Now, Cecilia," said Mr. Robinson, getting on the hearthrug, "is it not palatable to even *your* intelligence that blue is a most absurd colour for an egg?" (He meant "palpable," of course; but his pretentiousness was always leading him to use great words which he did not understand.) "It is just like these common people to have a blue egg; the next thing will be that it will be covered with Honiton lace! Ridiculous! Brown is the most suitable colour yet discovered for an egg—very pale brown with deeper brown speckles. But I can improve even upon this—and intend to, one day."

Then he flew away, and presently returned with some threads of crimson silk in his beak.

"Whatever is that for?" asked Mrs. Robinson.

"To weave into the nest to be sure, woman," said Mr. Robinson.

"O Robert," said his wife, "It must have cost a great deal per yard."

"The nest of R. Robinson, Esquire requires it," was all the reply she got.

At that moment the rook was coming by and saw Mr. Robinson on the fence.

"Good evening," said the rook; "you're looking very well, Robinson."

"*Mr.* Robinson," said the robin. (It was the first time the rook had offended, so R. was indulgent.) "Well, to tell you the truth, I am tired—had a hard day of it. Of course there are penalties attached to an honourous position like mine. My gardener fellow gives me a deal of trouble—requires constant super—ah—superlooking-after."

"Dear me! what a very nice garden!" said the rook.

"Yaas—yaas," said the robin. "It does me credit, I admit."



"Did you buy it?" asked the rook simply.

"Oh—why—ah, well ; not precisely to say bought it," said the robin: "I've taken it over—taken it over. Took a fancy to it, y'know—suitable site for my villa."

"And *you* pay the gardener too?" said the rook.

"Well—well—I haven't exactly settled with him as yet," said the robin. "But of course he'll be paid—fellow expects payment. But he's a terrible worry. Really doesn't understand the science of gardening. I've had to speak to him at least a dozen times to-day. You'd hardly credit the tenerity of his ignorance. 'Erthupp', I said to him only this very morning, as I sat on the barrow, 'what do *you* take to be the *raisin date*' (favourite foreign expression of mine: I'm extremely partial to both varieties of fruit), 'the *raisin date* of a garden?' What *do* you think the fellow said? You'll never guess—'Flowers.'

" 'Try again,' said I.

" 'Fruit,' said he.

" 'A *leetle* nearer the mark this time,' I

said. 'Fruit is a very good thing, but you haven't quite hit it yet. As it may be useful to you to know, I'll inform you—worms and grubs, my man—grubs and worms.' ”

“Why, certainly,” said the rook.

“‘Do you imagine I employ you to turn up the earth all day in order to plant flowers?’ I said. “And the fellow actually didn't know that his object in turning up the earth was to find grubs for me!”



“Incredible!” said the rook.

“One has to be patient with the fellow. One really can't be for ever punishing him—he's so full of faults.”

“You might peck him,” suggested the rook.

“Dear me—he's quite impeccable. Tough as leather!” said Mr. Robinson. “But I'm training him—I'm training him. He begins to understand that he has to put aside all his finds—all the buried treasure he digs up——”

“Meaning, of course, worms and grubs?” put in the rook.

B. Robinson drew himself up and sniffed. “If you will avoid these interruptions,” he said, “I will proceed. Yes—I allude to worms and grubs—to understand that all the buried treasure is, as it were, Crown property—I representing the Crown, of course. I have had reason to suspect, from time to time, that he subcutaneously disposes of some of the articles. Of course I don’t mind it if he merely eats a few himself. One mustn’t muzzle the mouth of the ox unless he treads on one’s corns; and he would tread on my corns by selling any of my worms and grubs.”

“Of course they are valuable property?” said the rook.

“Certainly!” said B. Robinson; “most marketable article—sort of medium of exchange; in point of fact those and red-



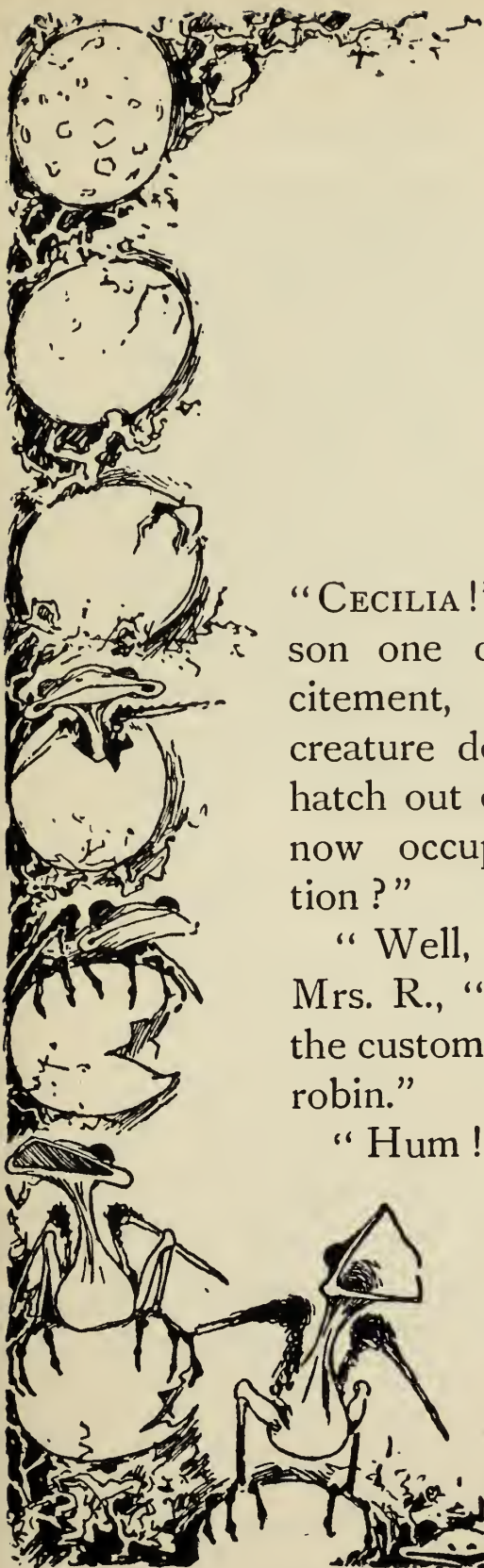
currants may be said to form a kind of currancy."

"He! he!" said the rook.

"I fail to perceive the subject of your merriment," said B. Robinson stiffly. "Ah—allow me to offer you a small supply of grubs to take home to Mrs. Rook who, I trust, is well? Erthupp!"

"Sir?" said the gardener, with a grin.

"Do not grin when I address you," said B. Robinson. "Give my friend Mr. Rook a punnet of grubs."



II

"CECILIA!" said Bob Robinson one day in great excitement, "what sort of creature do you propose to hatch out of that egg which now occupies your attention?"

"Well, Robert," said Mrs. R., "I was thinking of the customary thing—a baby robin."

"Hum! Well—I have

never greatly approved of those hideous little bare worm-bags—they are really most revolting objects to look upon; something like Christmas turkeys hung up at the poulterer's, only more so. I particularly object to the unsightly knobs they have for eyes. Now if you could make it convenient to hatch out a human baby—what do *you* think? I noticed last year, when looking in at the nursery window of those young married people whose house adjoins my garden (by an arrangement between myself and them), a very nice baby there—pink. It's there now—only bigger."

"But whatever could we do with it?" asked Mrs. R.

"Why, just think, when it grew up to be a man——"

"A man?" said Mrs. R. "Why, how could it grow up to be a man? I've seen it; it is not a bit like a man! Erthupp is a man; he has a nest on his head, and another on his chin, and a deep voice something like Mr. Rook's, only larger."

"Don't be silly and ignorant, Cecilia! Are those horrible little putty-coloured worm-bags which emerge from eggs in the least like ME? I should think not indeed. Well, don't they grow into robins?"

"I suppose you must be right, Robert," said Mrs. R.

"I am, Cecilia. Well, when that baby grew up to be a man, like Erthupp, he might be of great utility. You see, he would be my son, and under my orders. He could dig up worms and grubs for us all day: I would undertake his intuition myself."

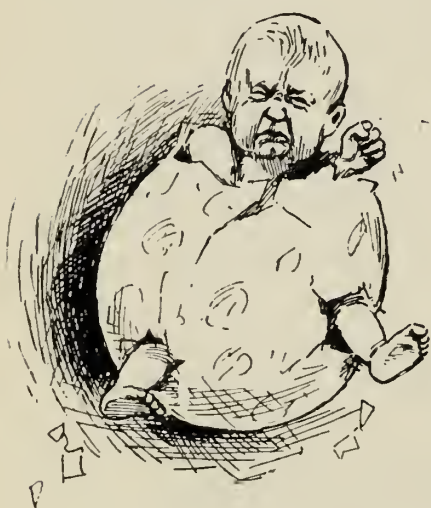
"I'm afraid I could hardly manage it," said Mrs. R. doubtfully.

"Then what is the use of you, my dear? I might just as well have married an incubus—*that* can hatch out mere birds! Now I'll tell you what I've decided to do. I will carry that egg of yours into that nursery, and put it in the baby's nest; and I have no doubt that the influence of association will cause it to hatch out a baby—and that will be our baby."

"But it is my only egg," said Mrs. Robinson sorrowfully. "I shall miss it so."

"Pooh, my dear. You mustn't brood over it—an egg is not a thing to brood upon."

So Mr. Robinson took advantage of the nursery window being open, and deposited the egg carefully by the side of the baby in the cot: and next morning Mr. R. arose early and went forth; immediately returning, full of excitement, to the nest.



"Get up, Cecilia," he said; "the egg *has* hatched out a baby! There's a brand new

baby by the side of the year old one! It's ours."

Mrs. Robinson was all of a flutter. "Dear, dear! just fancy now!" she said. "How jealous Mrs. Dick Robinson, who lives in that other garden over there, will be! She will be only too proud to call upon me now;

and I shall snub her! I'm just ready—only this feather to do—*do* find me a safety-pin—there."

They flew to the nursery window-ledge.

"Isn't it a *beauty*!" said Mrs. Robinson; "but how do you know it is ours? Perhaps it belongs to the young married people who live in the house?"

"Nonsense, my dear," said Bob Robinson. "How about the egg? I put the egg there—and there's the baby. What further proof can you want? Bless my soul, how women do jump to conclusions! Besides, do you mean to tell me you can't detect a resemblance to myself. There now—just catch that baby and me in profile—so—there; isn't there a distinct——?"

"Why, yes—now you call my attention to it—but however are we to carry it to the nest?"

"No necessity, no necessity," said Bob. "Of course, if it were really necessitous, I have no doubt I could manage it; but it will be a deal better where it is. I will go and find it some worms."

"But will it eat worms?" asked Mrs. R.

"Eat worms! What possible reason could it have for not eating worms?"

"Well, it might prefer——"

"What could it possibly prefer to worms? Does any rational being even look at any other article of food when it can obtain worms?"

"But I fancied—perhaps I'm silly—I had an idea that possibly human beings might not care for——"

"Pooh! No doubt human beings are guilty of a good deal of foolishness; but I think better of them than to believe that they do not relish worms."

So Bob Robinson busied himself, and found several beautifully fat worms; and, hopping into the nursery, placed them conveniently on the pillow close to the new baby's nose.

Presently he and Mrs. R. returned to the window-sill to see how things were going on.

"The worms are gone, you see," he said triumphantly.

"There are several worms on the ground outside," suggested Mrs. R. timidly.

"Pooh!" said Mr. R. "Eh? Oh yes, so there are. It's that fellow the starling who has a nest under the eaves. He's dropped them, of course; he's a most wasteful fellow."

"But his nest—or rather *her* nest—is on the other side of the house."

"There you are again, jumping to conclusions, Cecilia!"

Every day Bob Robinson found a number of worms for his new baby; and every day the starling who lived under the eaves, the other side of the house, was seen to pick up worms from beneath the nursery window; which (as Bob said) clearly proved that the starling had dropped them there himself. Poor Mrs. Bob Robinson had her doubts; but, being dutiful and reverential, said nothing about them.

Meanwhile Bob Robinson decided on certain alterations in the garden; he resolved to abolish flowers altogether, and devote the flower-beds wholly to the cultiva-



tion of worms ; and as he did not care for apples, he decided to cut down the apple-trees and replace them with red-currant bushes.



So he called Erthupp the gardener, and ordered him to make the alterations at once ; but great was his indignation next day on finding that he had not been obeyed !



“ Erthupp ! ” he said severely, perching on the barrow, “ I must request an explanation of this inadvertence to my orders ! ”



“ Very sorry, sir, ” replied Erthupp ; “ but I mentioned your wishes to the governor ; and he didn’t seem to think as the alterations was exackly requirable. ”



“ Erthupp ! ” said Bob, still more severely, “ I have spoken to you before concerning your habit of grinning when I address you ; be so good



as give up that habit! And as to the person you call 'the governor,' I am at a loss to understand to whom you elude, having been under the impression that that title belonged solely to myself. If you, by chance, elude to the human person whom I permit to reside in the adjoining villa——"

"That's 'im, sir," said Erthupp.

"I must request that you will cease to take your commands from him; otherwise I shall be compelled to give notice to both him and yourself!"

And Bob Robinson flew off in a stately manner, while Erthupp stood grinning in great glee. It was extremely lucky for him that Bob did not see him!

The next day came, and the alterations were not made; and Bob's anger was boundless.



"Erthupp," he said, "you will be good enough to leave at the end of this week."

Then Bob Robinson waited about the garden until the young married couple came out; and when they did, he said to the man—



"I must ask you to be kind enough to quit these premises at your early convenience."

Then Bob, in his stately way, retired to the nest; and sat on the edge of it, looking down on the humans.

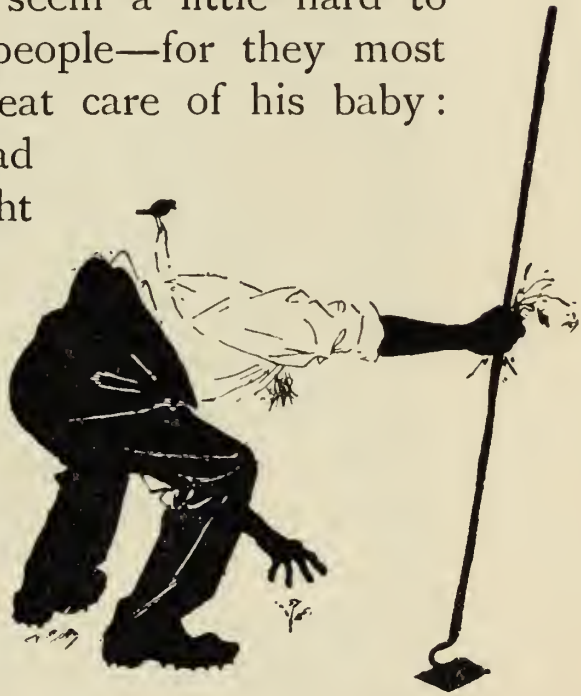
"Cecilia," he said presently, "do you know I almost regret having given them notice! I—I perceive the lady is crying. Perhaps I've been a trifle harsh—but still, one can *not* put up with——"

And Bob tried hard to persuade himself that he was justified in his severity; but his mind was not quite comfortable, all the same.

And when the next week came, the gardener had gone!

Daily Bob Robinson took the worms to the new baby; and at times it came into his mind that it did seem a little hard to turn out the young people—for they most certainly *did* take great care of his baby: but Bob's dignity had been ruffled by the slight to his authority; and he could not persuade himself to give the young pair permission to stay.

Very often the young man would walk moodily round the garden in the evening with his eyes on the ground; and very often the young woman would appear at the window with red eyes, as if she had been crying; but when the young man was there she would pretend to be happy, and keep telling him that something or other would not be so



very dreadful, and that, very likely, things would come right in the end.

“Do you know, Cecilia,” said Bob Robinson one evening, “I’ve decided to let those young people remain. They appear to take it to heart so! He shall apologise to me, and we’ll say no more about it. I had made up my mind to remove baby to the nest to-morrow, and take him out of their hands; but I will give them permission to stay instead.”

But, behold, in the morning there was a sale going on in the house; and that day all the nice handsome furniture was sold, only a few of the plainest things being set aside not to be sold. All day Bob waited about to find the young people and tell them they might stay; but he could not find them anywhere.

“But at any rate we must now certainly remove our baby to the nest,” said Bob. “And—why, Cecilia—the baby has gone! They have gone away and stolen our baby! Cecilia, we will trace those people and bring them to justice.”

III

BOB ROBINSON devoted himself to tracing the whereabouts of the young pair who had stolen his baby ; he flew about all over the neighbourhood, looking in all the nicely furnished villas ; but he could not find them.

Then, quite by chance, he looked in at the window of a much smaller and meaner house, in a poorer neighbourhood hard by ; and there he saw the lady sitting by the cot in which lay the younger baby—Bob's baby. Bob was about to tap very angrily at the window, when he stopped himself suddenly, for the lady looked very sad and down-cast.

“Hum !” he muttered to himself. “Perhaps I may as well leave baby with her a little longer, as I *have* found him. He appears to be safe with her—in fact she seems

to have quite taken to him. Nevertheless, it was most unjustifiable to remove him without consulting me."

Then Bob looked round the premises, and flew back to Mrs. Bob.

"Their new place seems to be very small—very inferior indeed," he said; "and I can't find the four servants they had at the other house—*my* house. I could only perceive one—quite another class of servant, with no style at all."

A few days after that he said to Mrs. Bob, "I've been looking round to see how baby is getting on, and leaving a few worms; and I noticed a card in the upper window with some long word on it. I shall have to inquire rather closely into the suitability of any persons they may introduce into the house to inhabit the same premises as my baby. I think it would be as well, Cecilia, for us to move into the yew-tree in front of their new premises; we could then keep an eye upon what goes on. Ha! Who is that person alighting from a brougham and entering

the house? Looks like a medical petitioner! I trust baby—why, Cecilia, it *is* baby he has gone in to see! I must instantly remove——”

“Don’t you think, dear,” said Mrs. Bob, “that, as these people have had the care of him until now and are evidently doing their best, it might be as well to leave him in their hands for a little, just to see how they go on?”

“Well, well,” replied Bob. “Yes, they certainly seem to have taken to him, and to be interested in his welfare, although their conduct in removing him without my sanction—but let that pass. Yes, we will leave him, and see how things go on—for a limited period.”

The doctor came again two days after, and then he came every day. Bob Robinson and Mrs. Bob spent the greater part of their time on a branch near the window, looking into the room.

“Do you know, Cecilia, I really am much concerned about Baby,” said Bob; “very much concerned; and it would

really appear as though that young woman almost shared our anxiety about him. She seems most attentive, positively anxious. In fact she looks quite careworn! I made a point of waking up a good many times in the course of the night and peeping in; and she has sat up all night. It is really most self-sacrificing in her, for the sake of a baby quite unconnected with herself! Dear me, the doctor almost appears to live here; here he is again."

IV

“CECILIA,” whispered Bob uncomfortably some days later, “can you make out what that oblong white box is on the table? That must have been brought in last night after we had gone to bed to get half-an-hour’s sleep; and why do they not draw up the blinds? They *must* be aware that it is no longer night. Here, you can see the white box at this little opening by the side of the blind. And—dear me—the young woman is putting white flowers on the box. Cecilia, where is baby?”

Mrs. Bob said nothing; but she flew on to the grass-plot, and picked a white daisy, and laid it on the window-sill.

Three days after that Mr. and Mrs. Bob Robinson were very busy picking daisies and other such little white flowers as they could carry, and putting them on a little new humble mound in the cemetery a short way off. They worked all day, and towards

evening the little mound was completely covered with small white flowers.

"Dear me, the young woman does nothing but cry," said Bob, as he and Cecilia sat looking in at the window of the small house. "She must have been very fond of our baby. Any one would imagine it had been her own. Well, I do believe she did her very best for our child; and I shall always regret that I behaved so harshly to those people."

And Bob Robinson sat on the window-sill, and sang every day to the young woman to cheer her; while Mrs. Bob placed fresh daisies on the little mound.

"Don't you think, dear, it would be better for us to be contented with little robins in future?" said Mrs. Bob.



The Island of
Professor Menu

The Island of Professor Menu

[When I had finished writing the following story, I was seized with an impression of having read something like it before—possibly during a previous existence. It seemed as though I had in some mysterious way drawn up the incidents from the WELLS of Memory.—AUTHOR.]

I

IT was on a voyage from Victoria to the Sandwich Islands that the good ship *Victoria Sandwich* (so named from the places she plied between) had foundered.

Seven of us had drifted for about three

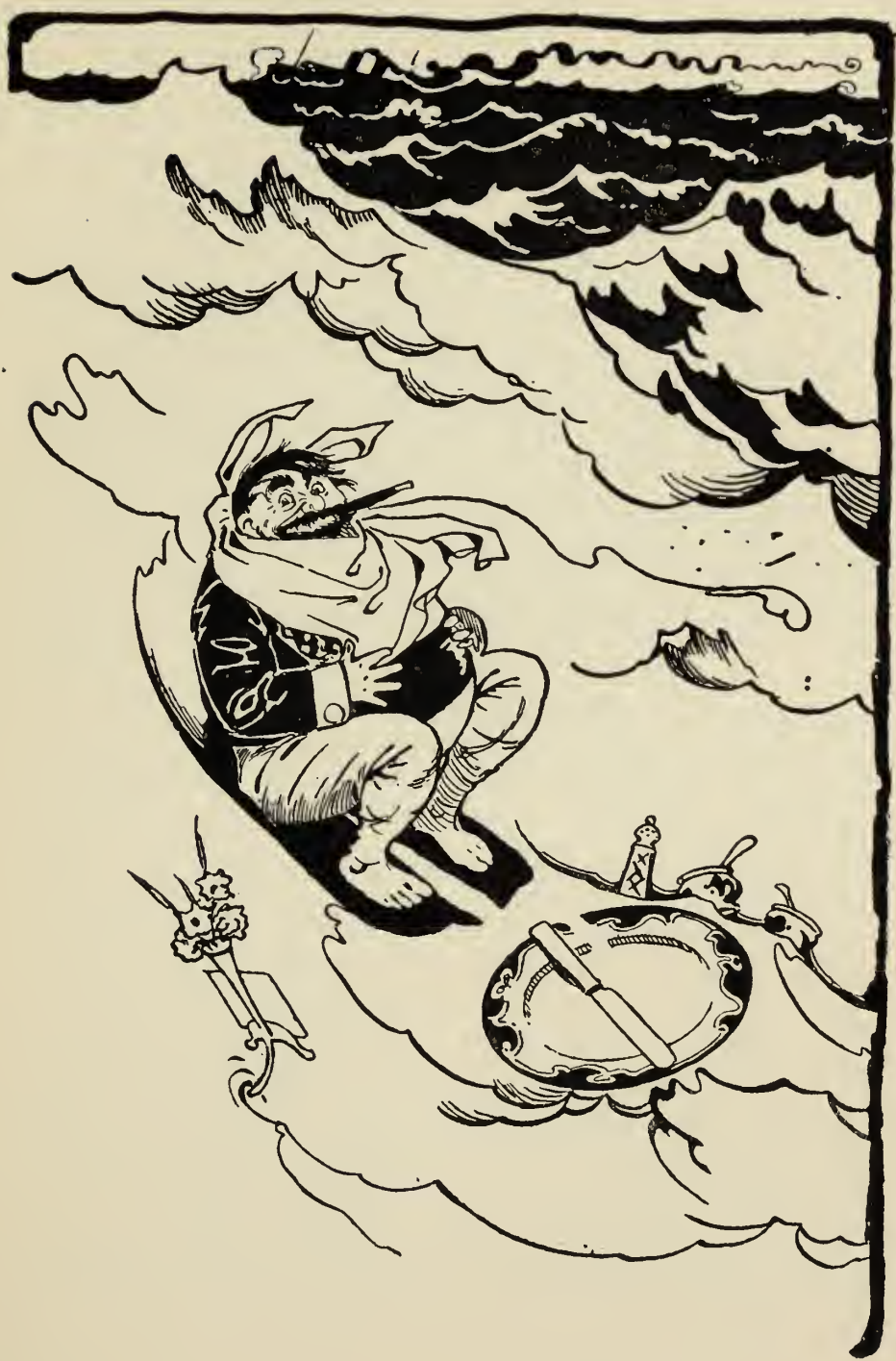
years on a lee-scupper, the only object on which we could save ourselves, all the boats being smashed. We had suffered so much from hunger that we had been forced to eat one another, turn and turn about ; and my last recollection is of the Friday when my weekly turn came round again to eat the other six.

Then I fainted from repletion ; and when I next became conscious, I was lying, still ill with acute indigestion, in a bunk on board the schooner *Gum Drop*.

A doctor sat by my side holding my wrist. There was an indescribable peculiarity about this man which made me detest him.

He said, "The Captain of this vessel objects to queer combinations." I was too weak to inquire what queer combinations were.

As soon as my indigestion had lessened a little, I went on deck. Standing on the companion was a man with an indescribable peculiarity about him which made me detest him.



"What are you doing here?" said the doctor. "Your place is in the kitchen garden—you know that."

"They won't have me in the kitchen garden—they say I'm running to seed," replied the man, with a cowed look.

"If you don't go, I'll have you boiled!" said the doctor threateningly.

Chained to the mast were a flock of sheep ; and I noticed that when the man put his head above the top of the companion-ladder they all stretched their necks at him, baaing eagerly.

Presently there was a great outcry ; and the strange man ran up the ladder, followed by the Captain, who was roaring angrily. The Captain's language was dreadful—he hardly said a single sentence without a whole string of expressions such as "Dear me!" "Bless my whiskers!" "Lork-a-mussy!" and similar dreadful phrases. He tore off great pieces of the strange man's clothing, and rolled them up tightly into a ball, which he put in his mouth and chewed. In the scuffle, the strange-looking man fell among

the sheep, which instantly began to browse his hair off, while he screamed loudly.

"Captain!" said the doctor angrily, "it is bad taste to eat your passengers."

The Captain turned savagely upon him, and rolled off a long list of fearful expressions, of which "My Aunt!" and "Golly!" were among the mildest.

There was an indescribable peculiarity about the Captain which caused me to detest him.

The Captain came back, still in a rage. "Passenger you call him!" he said; "I call him a vegetable—a lunatic vegetable! I can't stand him—my men can't stand him. He gets his roots all round the tackle so that they can't work it! Yesterday they turned round the screw, and stopped the ship. I won't have it, I tell you! He scatters seeds all over the deck. It was a clean deck before he came aboard—look at it now! My Aunt!"

I looked forward at the forecastle: the whole deck was hidden by a luxuriant crop of mingled wheat, potatoes, dandelions, poppies, and other plants.



Wall-flowers were growing in all the tackle blocks and the holes of the dead-eyes ; there were nasturtiums trailing up the mast ; thistles waved in the tops ; the bulwarks were covered with stonecrop and London-pride.

“ Horrid ! ” said the Captain. “ Catch me taking aboard a cargo of maniac vegetables and seed-scatterers again ! I suppose you took this ship for a seed-vessel ! ” And with this parting shot he flew to the ginger-beer bottle for solace. I found that he was always in a state of ginger-beer.

On looking about me, I perceived the meaning of his last allusion : the deck was piled up to the tops with threepenny packets of seeds.

The doctor (whose name was Merioneth) and I stood leaning over the bulwarks in the moonlight.

“ You appear to be a bit of a gabbler,” he said suddenly ; “ so I feel inclined to tell you the secret of my life.”

I looked round, and perceived the strange man eyeing me furtively ; and a sensation of horror crept over me as I seemed to

detect in his eyes a resemblance to those of a potato. He averted his glance quickly, and planted his eyes in the furrows of the sea.

There was a faint perfume of mingled cookery in the air—that perfume which makes one long to creep down into the kitchen when cook is not looking, and dip a great slice of bread into the dripping-pan. Have you ever done this? If you have not, try it! But mind the grease does not drip on your new clothes, or cook will find it all out—and then!

This perfume of cookery grew stronger as the schooner progressed on her way. It filled the whole air from horizon to horizon. Among the scents, I could clearly distinguish those of fried onions, hot cake, Irish stew, herrings, pork chops, raspberry jam, and sausages. I was beginning to get hungry; but since my indigestion consequent upon eating the six castaways, I had not dared to eat anything.

In the course of a few days we sighted an island with a volcano in the middle. From

this volcano or burning mountain came a long thin line of smoke; and it was this smoke which distributed the savoury perfumes I have mentioned.

This smell of general cookery from the volcano had become overpowering. Just think of it! Suppose the doctor had forbidden you to eat anything for a week, and your cook were preparing for a great dinner-party, and all these perfumes came to you from the kitchen! What would you do? Exactly. That's what *I* did. I sat down and cried.

When we neared the volcanic island, the Captain, assisted by his men, hastily enclosed Merioneth, the flock of sheep, the packets of seeds, the strange man, a large pig, a pine-apple, and all the other properties which Merioneth had with him, in a great net, which was promptly hauled up to the yard-arm. Then, as the vessel rapidly passed the island, the net was cast loose, and fell with a thump on the shore.

"Hullo! *You* still here? Three blind mice!" said the Captain to me. "Over-board you go!"

The Captain's hair and beard were ginger-



coloured, in consequence of his addiction to ginger-beer.

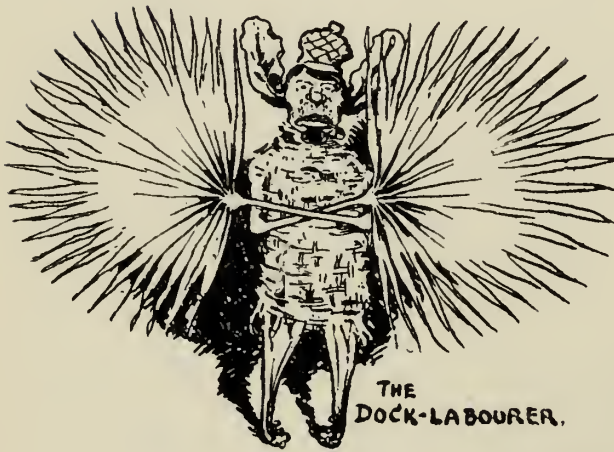
He lowered me into the lee-scupper, which was still towing astern. In my despair I screamed madly for the waiter—the chambermaid—nurse—anything.

Then I saw that Merioneth had taken pity on me, and was putting out from the island in a packet—one of the threepenny packets I had seen on deck.

II

THE DOCK-LABOURERS

THE packet was propelled by three boatmen. There was an indescribable peculiarity about them which caused me to detest them. I



noticed that they had large green hands which they held in the air, varying the position from time to time. I had never seen men so wrapped up before ; they were entirely swathed in bass-

matting bound round with raffia-grass.

I noticed that each of them had a label tied to him, and that the flock of sheep in the

stern kept trying to get at them. In the stern sat a man whom I had not seen before : he had a large, flat, white linen cap, and sleeves and apron of the same material. In one hand he held a ladle. His hair struck me—it was bright green.

We landed ; and I could not help noticing the gait of the three boatmen. They walked very stiffly, stopping to pull away their legs from the ground from time to time, as though the legs were beginning to take root.

These men drove the sheep, and carried the packets of seeds and other articles, up to a door in the wall of the crater of the volcano. There appeared to be some secret about this crater ; for no one was permitted to enter.

I still had not partaken of food since the consumption of the six castaways, and was faint with hunger. Under these circumstances I was maddened by the appetising perfume of cooking which proceeded from the vicinity of the crater and pervaded the island.

Merioneth noticed my condition, and hastily

breaking a few fingers and toes off the strange man, threw them to me.

"It's all right, Peppermint," he said (my name is Peppermint). "They'll grow again in no time. He doesn't mind."

The fingers were crimson, the toes white. They ate short and crisp. The strange man did not appear to mind.

While I was devouring them, the green-haired man in white linen came down to where I sat on the beach.

"Thanks for calling," he said; "but I suppose you know you're not welcome here? Of course I know well enough who sent you—the School of Cookery. You've come to find out what you can: but you won't find out much, I can tell you. What are we to do with the beast?" he said to Merioneth.

"There's my room," said Merioneth.

They conducted me to a door in the wall of the crater; this door led into a room which had another door leading into the crater. This second door they hastily shut.

III

THE FRYING IN THE FUMAROLE

THE perfume of cooking was maddening here. All the most deliriously appetising odours I have ever come across in all the restaurants I have ever known would have been but a drop in the ocean to this. There was a vast sound of frying in the air; it evidently proceeded from the interior of the crater.

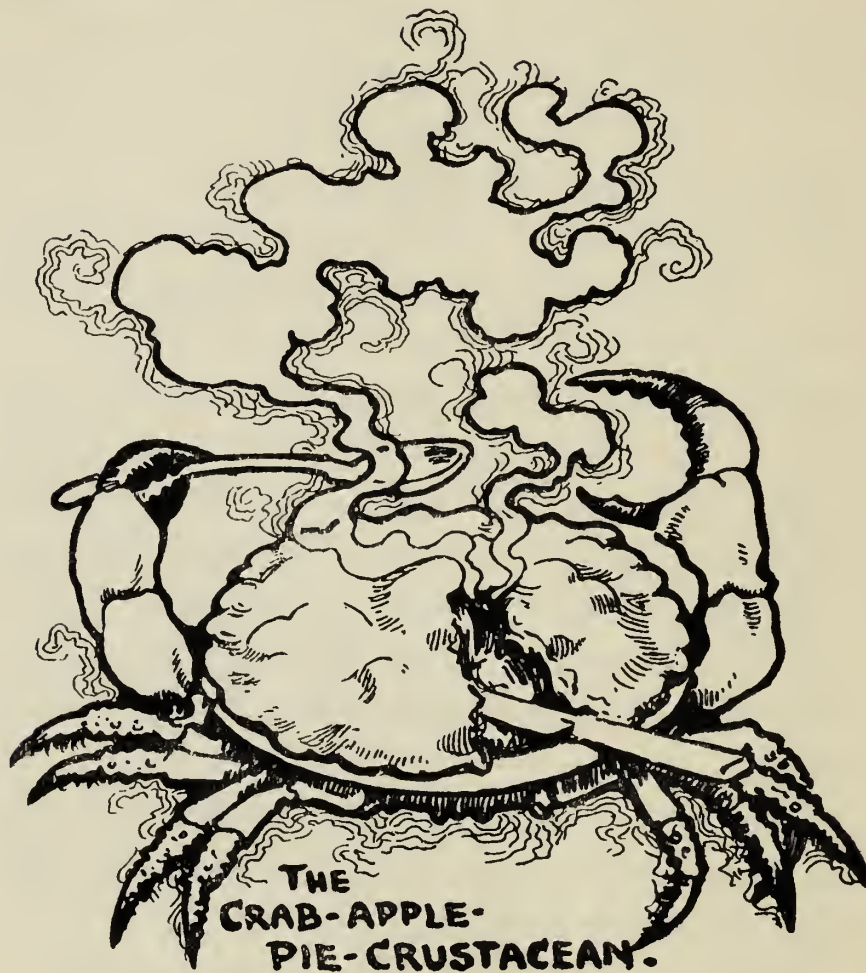
Merioneth said he would lunch with me, but that Menu was too preoccupied with some work to come.

“Menu!” said I; “I know that name.”

“Do you?” said he. “What a donkey I was to mention it to you.”

“Merioneth,” said I suddenly, “why has the strange man green hair — something

like your friend's, and eyes like those of potatoes?"



"Eh?" he said. "Never noticed it!" Then he went out, and I heard him call "Menu!"

Where had I heard the name of Menu before? What were the words I had read in the newspaper years ago? "The Menu Puddles," was it? "The Menu Muddles!"

Then it came back to me. Menu, the celebrated experimental cook, who had been driven from London because of the effect of his awful experiments on the digestions of the customers at his restaurant! He had had to leave England.

What could it mean? A locked crater on a lonely island, a notorious experimental chef, and this fearful perfume of cookery!

IV

THE THINGUMMY IN THE PLANTATION

I FLED from the maddening odour into the woods. There was an indescribable peculiarity about the trees which caused me to detest, and want to eat, them.

I became aware of a strange grotesque form peering at me from among the foliage. It had one glass eye, set in a cylinder of brass ; the fore-part of its body appeared to be square and of the colour of mahogany ; while the hinder part, as far as I could make out, bore some strange resemblance to a tortoise ; and it appeared to have fins and a tail, somewhat like those of a skate.

I fled, shrieking ; it was growing dark. I was conscious of a pattering of feet following me.

Screaming for the police, I leapt from a

PURSUED BY THE
HINGUMMY!
— — —
A SENSATION
LEAP !!



high cliff on to the beach ; the Thingummy followed. Then I picked up a stone, and, facing round, hurled it. It broke the Thingummy's one glass eye into bright splinters ; and the Thingummy put up for repairs.

V

THE FRYING OF THE HAM

I RETURNED to my room. The perfume of varied cookery had now concentrated itself into the most maddening odour I had ever been tortured by—it was as though all the ham in the world were being fried inside there. This time it was no mere soles, nor potatoes, nor even sausages—it was ham!

As I realised this I rose, seized the handle of the door into the crater, and flung it open before me. There was brown gravy in the dripping-pan. I saw *something* upon a vast silver grill; and then blotting this out appeared the face of old Menu, crimson with heat.

In a moment he had gripped me by the shoulder with a hand smeared with gravy,

had twisted me off my feet, and flung me headlong back into my own room.

“Ruin the work of a lifetime!” I heard Menu say. “But I’ll roast his ribs!”

I picked myself up and stood trembling, my mind a chaos of the most dreadful misgivings. Could it be possible? Would he really cook me? Did he propose to serve me up whole, with a lemon in my mouth; or would he make an Irish stew of me? Hungry as I was, I did not like this idea.

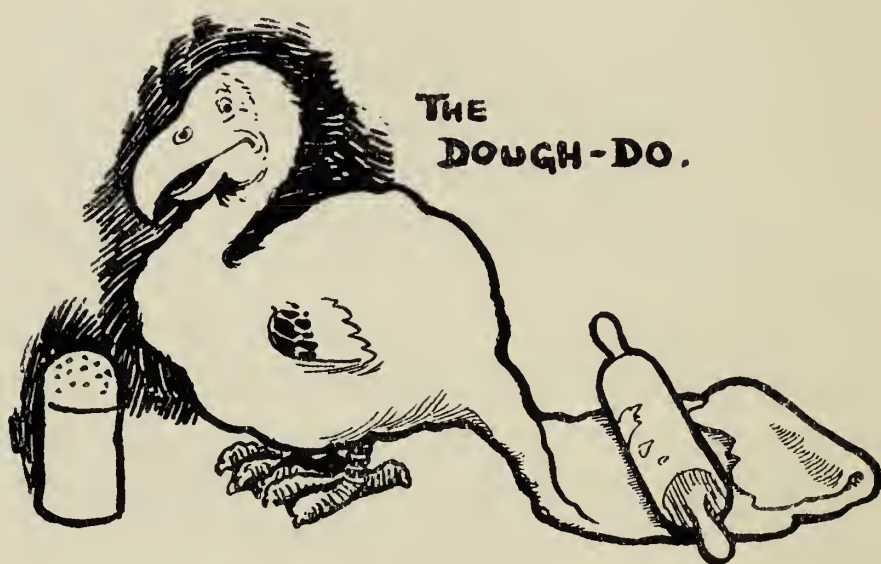
I fled again into the plantation round the corner.

I wandered until I came to a strange kitchen garden containing a row of hot-houses on one side, and a row of cages and aquaria on the other. In the middle were neat beds.

Out of one of the cages came a strange creature—at least it began to come out, though it appeared as if it would never finish. It had the head and body of a sheep, save that the body was many yards in length. Arranged quite closely together beneath its body were one hundred legs—

those on its right side being roast, and those on its left boiled; along the middle of its back grew a long line of turnips, boiled to a turn.

As I was observing it, an extraordinary bird hopped down from a perch in another



cage; it had no feathers or down on its body, which was of the colour of putty. It commenced to knead itself with its feet, lying on its back to do so.

Suddenly it perceived me. "Hullo!" it called out, "here's another New Combina-

tion! Tell him the law. You'll have to obey the law, you know—none escape!”

“None escape!” cried a host of Combinations suddenly appearing from the cages and hothouses. Then the sheep began to recite a strange code, the others joining in:—

“Not to be under—or overdone; *that* is the law.

Are we not Combys?

“Not to be tough or stringy; *that* is the law.

Are we not Combys?

“Not to go to table without a dish; *that* is the law.

Are we not Combys?

“Evil are the punishments of those who break the law. Back to the kitchen they shall go to be réchauffés!”

At that moment Menu and Merioneth appeared. “Hullo!” said Menu, “I thought we should find you here, though I suspect you haven't paid for admission. As you *are* here, let me take you round and show you the exhibits. All my own invention—all done by kindness, and in the interests of cookery. I found that cooks do not really understand cooking, and I took this island in order to improve the art. They would not have

me any longer in London, because I gave people indigestion. But one must practise on somebody, you know. Merioneth here tries all my new Combination dishes now ; that's why he looks so ill. I've invented the most wonderful Combinations in cookery—here's my list of patent dishes. Please take one ; also a copy of my latest Combination-Cookery Book, price one shilling—thanks. That long creature is my patent centipede sheep—you see we get a hundred legs to one body ; and the saving of space and fodder is great."

VI

ALL ABOUT THE COMBYS

“BUT,” I said, “the process of putting him together must be very unpleasant for the sheep!”

“Not a bit,” said Professor Menu. “All done by seeds—I’ve discovered that everything can be grown from seed, you know. First of all I bought a five-legged ‘lamb from a travelling show, and layered his tail as one treats carnations—just like the old lady treated her cow in the ‘Lost Idea’—I taught her, you know. The lambs which sprang from the tip of the tail varied in the number of legs they possessed; and I selected those with the greatest number, repeated the layering process, and very soon obtained a centipede lamb. By grafting his tail on a plant I caused his spine to be furnished

with vegetable marrow in place of the ordinary kind; and by sprinkling a little turnip-seed along his back I succeeded in obtaining this row of turnips. I had now completed my sheep; but what I desired was an animal always ready for the table.

“By planting the legs in a hot-bed (in the case of the boiled legs it was, of course, a hot-water bed), and keeping them in this situation for a considerable time, I obtained a gentle but prolonged heat which gradually and by quite natural means cooked the legs to a turn; and this heat, spreading genially over the whole body, also cooked the turnips. In the case of lambs I have a line of green peas and mint along the back. When I require more sheep, I just sow some seed from the turnips on this one's back.

“That bird you see kneading itself is the dough-do. It is now sufficiently kneaded; and you perceive another bird, with a tail like a paste-roller, advancing? That is the rolling-pin-tail; and I invented it to roll the dough-do.

“That bird over there whose tail branches

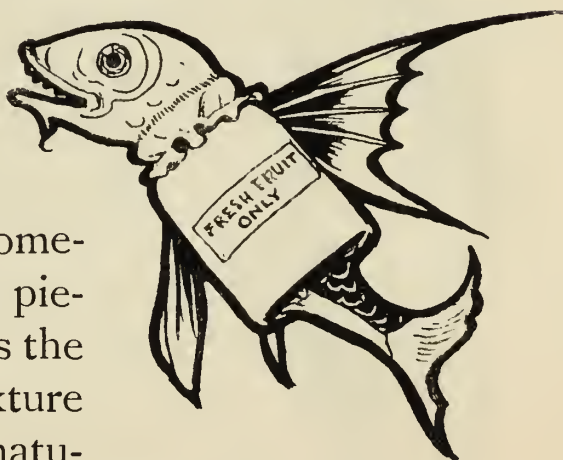


naturally into pea-sticks covered with peas is the green-peacock. He also has vegetable marrow in his bones ; in fact vegetable marrow—one of my greatest discoveries—is the chief connecting link between animal and vegetable life.

“ Now look in this fish-pond. There is the currant - jelly - fish. There is the cow-eel, from which excellent soup, combining the qualities of beef-tea and turtle-soup, may be obtained.

Those creatures somewhat like lobsters are pie-crustaceans ; and here is the crab-apple. By a mixture of the two, we obtain natural apple-dumplings. That large fish with a tough shell, growing on the aquatic plant, is the halibutternut ; it provides a dish which is a combination of the fish course and the dessert. The pond is brilliantly lighted at night by a combination of the lamprey and the

THE
CURRANT-JELLY-
FISH.



ray species, from which we obtain the lamp-ray. It beats the incandescent light hollow."

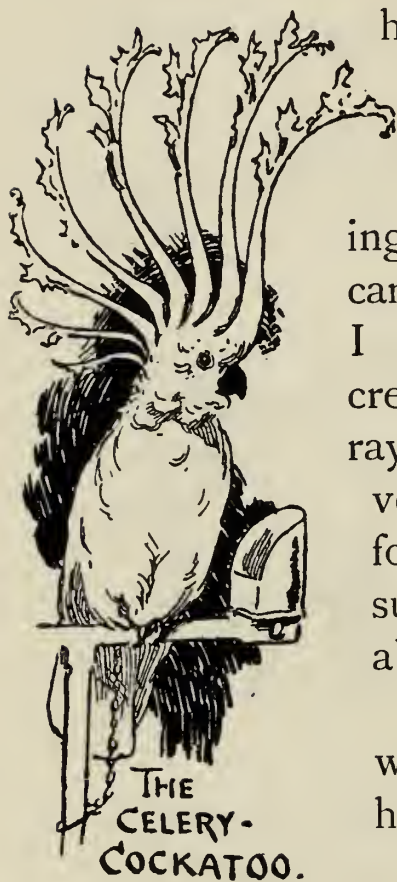
"And what," I asked, still shuddering, "was the thingummy which hunted me the other evening?"

"Oh, that must have been the snap-shotting-turtle—produced by grafting an ordinary photographic camera on a snapping turtle. I subsequently improved the creature by a fusion of the X ray or Röntgen ray—a development of the common ray found in these waters. These submarine rays are indispensable for torpedo-boat catchers."

I now perceived a cockatoo with an unusually fine crest on his head.

"Ah yes," said Menu, "the celery-cockatoo. Having been

struck by the uselessness of the sham heads of celery forming the crest of the bird, I conceived the notion of producing real celery in



its place. This bird yields one good dish per week. Result of vegetable marrow again.

“Here is a plantation of vegetable marrow-bones—all growing ready cooked for table. The white napkin round each is the natural foliage.”

At this point I was startled by a huge fly settling on my head. With a shriek, I flicked it off.

“Do not injure it,” exclaimed the Professor. “That is a combination of which I am particularly proud—the lamb’s sweet-bread-and-butter-fly. It is a most valuable addition to the table. Try some of the fruit of this plant.”

He pointed to a most curious plant, whose branches bore great tufts of various sweet-meats—fondants, burnt almonds, assorted creams, and so on in infinite variety.

I tasted some—having still eaten nothing (except those little pieces of the strange man) since my lunch on the six castaways. The sweets were delicious.

“That,” said Professor Menu, “is the sweetstuff-briar. Those tufts upon it are, of

course, candy-tufts. But let us get home to the crater, for I am wasting valuable time."

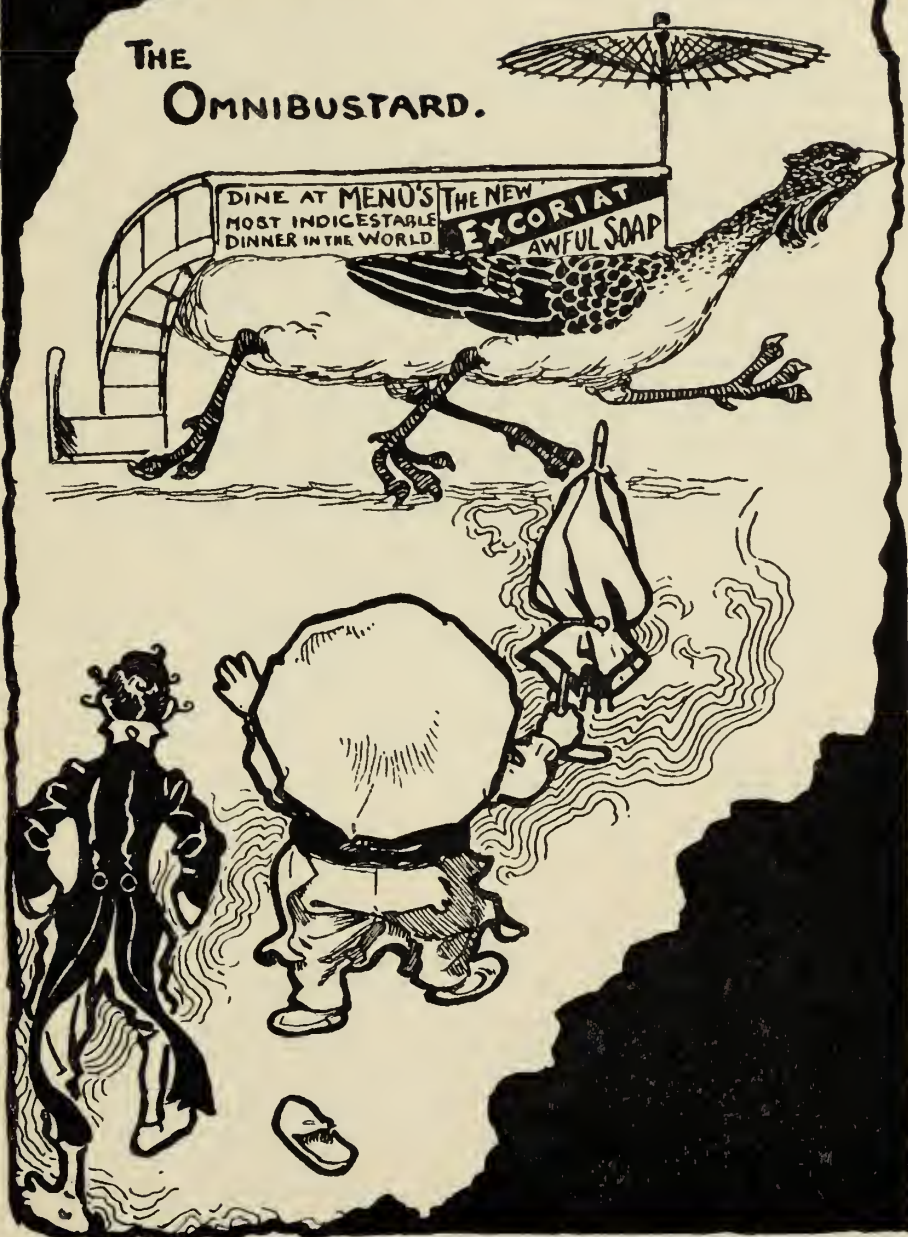
So saying, he hailed an enormous bird which was passing. Its back was covered with rows of seats like those on a road-car; only these seats were natural to the bird, and formed of quills luxuriously covered with downy feathers. We climbed up and took seats; and the bird started at a great pace toward the crater, stopping at corners to look out passengers.

"This great bird is the omnibustard," said the Professor; "I am going to fit him with a lightning-conductor to quicken his pace."

We were now passing under a beautiful grove of trees; and I was charmed with the sounds of a magnificent string-band which was performing the overture to *Tannhäuser*.

"Ah—it's only my violinnets," said Menu; "a combination of the common linnet and the violin. You will distinguish the deep notes of the bass violinnet—a combination of the two former ingredients with the common bass, very plentiful in the sea about here.

THE
OMNIBUSTARD.



That motif you hear now is being performed by the guitarmigans."

"Professor Menu," I said, "there is an indescribable peculiarity about you which causes me to detest you! I don't like that affair about London and the digestions of the customers."

"Come in here," said Menu, pushing me into my room. "Look here—I'll try to convince you of my innocence and virtue. After all, indigestion is such a little thing! It is possible that, outside this little tiny atom of a world, indigestion is unknown. Do you suppose the moon suffers from indigestion?" said Professor Menu.

"I don't know," I replied, pondering; "she looks very yellow at times. You may have been giving the moon some of your Combination dishes."

"I assure you I haven't; it must be the green cheese; besides, what is a little indigestion when weighed against the scientific advantages of my Combinations?" There was an indescribable peculiarity about his reasoning which caused me to detest it.

“Look here!” said I, “how about that smell of frying ham?”

“It is not ham,” he said earnestly. “It is the porcupineapple. It is my latest and grandest Combination—a magnificent dish with boundless possibilities. You saw the pig and the pineapple which Merioneth brought me from Victoria? This is a combination of the two, with many additions. Don’t you see that this compilation of mine will combine the delights of roast pork and apple sauce walking about in the fields all ready for table.”

“Hum!” I said, mad with hunger. “And who is the strange man who came with us in the ship?”

“He is the vegetarian,” said Menu. “He is entirely vegetable——”

“But the peculiarity of his gait?” I interrupted suspiciously.

“Merely a kitchen-garden gait,” explained Menu. “I have a great trouble in keeping the sheep from eating him, because his hair is composed of grass and spring-onions. His head is a very large potato, and has

THE PORCUPINEAPPLE.



most expressive eyes ; his legs are composed of giant rhubarb stalks ; his fingers are radishes—you ate some, I recollect. He again has vegetable marrow in his bones, of course."

"And those strange men in the boat?"

"They are dock-labourers—merely a skilful use of the ordinary dock-plant grown in the London docks.

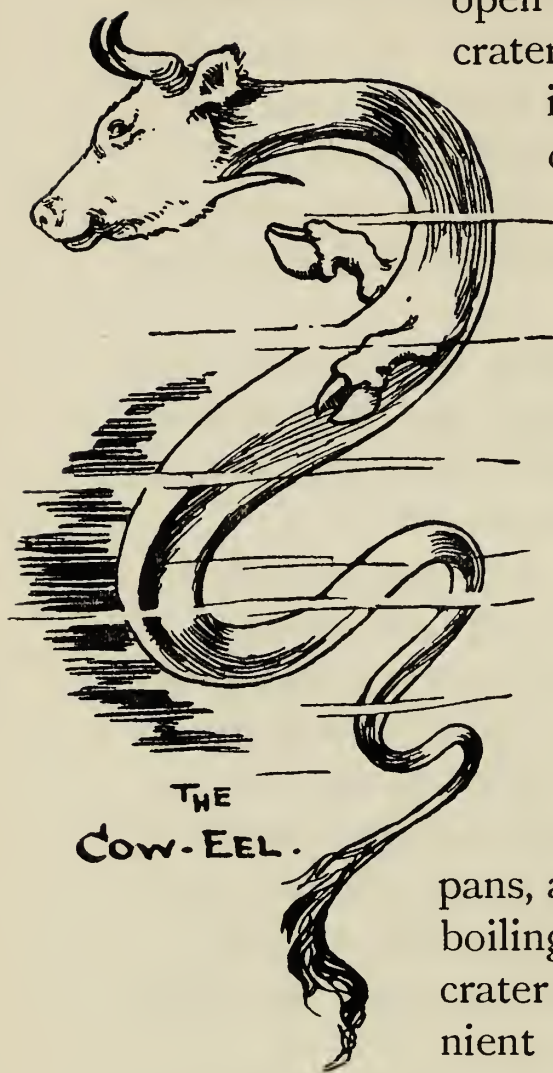
First I made a mixture of the dock and the Swede—Swedes being the best sailors. You observed that their hands consisted of palms only—that is palm-fronds.

These, as you saw, they use as sails for propelling the boat. It is in consequence of the delicate palm element in them that I am forced to swathe them up in bass-matting. Their great trouble is that when they are on land their sea-kail legs are always trying to take root. This gives a good deal of inconvenience. They can't keep their sea legs."

I jumped from my chair in terror as a loud report reached my ears.

"It's all right, Peppermint," said Merioneth. "It's only the ginger-poppies going off all at once."

"Come in," said Professor Menu, flinging open the door which led to the crater. I entered. Stretch-



THE
COW-EEL.

ing across a great part of the main crater was a vast silver grill, on which were placed various recently invented sorts of meat, all frizzling and popping merrily. My hunger was dreadful. I sniffed round feebly, and burst into tears.

On various little fiery holes round the crater were stewpans, frying-pans, saucepans, and so on. A stream of boiling water issued from the crater and formed a convenient pool in which fowls, fish, and vegetables were boil-

ing. The stream also heated receptacles for keeping the plates hot. In front of a

wall of hot lava turned a gigantic spit, and beneath it stood a very curious beast, catching the gravy. That was the dripping-panther. There were a number of other curious beasts holding the washed plates—these were plate-raccoons. A strange bird was fussing about all over the place, tasting the various dishes, adding a little salt here, a little pepper there, a little sauce in another place.

“That bird—a Combination of which I am very proud—is my apprentice, the professed cuckoo,” explained Menu. “You see that other bird—that very fat three-cornered bird. He is filled with jam, and is the jam-puffin.”

“And those things like rabbits, with dark brown dots all over them, and glaze on their backs?” I asked.

“Merely my currant-bunnies,” explained the Professor. “Those irritable ones that are quarrelling together near the fire are hot-cross-bunnies.”

“And those strangely affectionate oysters which would insist on coming to me to be patted, on the sea-shore?”

“Ah yes—friendly natives,” said the professor.

VII

HOW THE COMBYS TASTED

AT this moment the perfume of cookery became intolerable and frenzying, and I rushed out and sat down to have a good cry. There was a sound of scuffling inside the crater. The inner door of my room, which I had hastily shut in going out, burst open with a crash ; and out rushed a THING.

It was neither animal nor vegetable—it was edible. It was the porcupineapple escaping from the spit, half done. In its mouth was a lemon.

My hunger maddened me : I fell upon it, half done as it was, and ate the whole of it. My appetite grew stronger with this relish.

“I mean to eat the whole of 'em,” I screamed, “all the curious Combinations—every man Jack of 'em. I'm going to have



THE
LEAP
INTO
THE
CRATER!
HA!!

a regular bank-holiday, because I have my wits untied !”

“ Don’t, Peppermint, for goodness’ sake !” cried Merioneth.

I was not to be restrained ; five weeks’ fast had made me ravenous. I attacked and devoured all I met : first the Vegetarian, beginning with his grass-and-spring-onion hair and finishing with his radish toes ; then the three dock-labourers ; then the centipede sheep, turnips and all—accompanied by the currant - jelly - fish ; then the lamb’s-sweet-bread-and-butterfly—all of them, finishing up with dessert and sweets—the crab-apple-pie-crustacean, the candy-tufts of the sweet-stuff-briar.

Then I turned hungrily towards Menu and Merioneth ; and they plunged precipitately down the crater, and were lost to me. I remember nothing more ; but believe I was picked up by a passing vessel, or a policeman, or something, in Hammersmith Broadway.

Tommy Twister's
Discovery

Tommy Twister's

Discovery

THIS is not one of those absurd stories about "Once upon a time" which tell you of things that happened before you were born. What does it matter to you what happened before you were born? If anything at all *did* happen before you were born, it was intended to amuse those people who lived then, and does not matter in the least to you. We read of all sorts of people who are said to have done things at that early period, and they are nearly always a nuisance!

There are the kings and queens of England for instance, a set of worrying persons who insist on your learning their dates.

What would they have said if they had been compelled to learn the date at which *you* were going to be born, and the date of your first tooth, and the time at which you go to bed and get up? They would have said, "This is no business of ours! If he ever *is* born let him learn his own dates and not try to put his duties on other people's shoulders!"

Just so; and if they had attended to *their* duties, and learned their own dates while they lived—if they ever did live—you would not have to bother about them now. As far as you are concerned, the world began when you were born; and the better you behave, the better the world will be.

Well, a very little time ago—long, long after you were born—there lived a small boy named Tommy; and he still lives, no doubt; although I have not seen him lately.

One day his father was telling him about Doctor Nansen having gone away in a ship to discover the North Pole. You have heard of the North Pole, eh? It is a place at the top of the world—at least the map of



the world is always placed that way up, so it must be called the top—and is surrounded by ice; and people have been trying for hundreds of years to reach it; but, as those people lived before you were born, we will not trouble ourselves about them for fear they might want us to learn their dates.

“Why do people want to discover the North Pole?” asked Tommy.

His father wondered a minute, for the question had never occurred to him before, because he was a jam-manufacturer, and never had to send any of his jam to the North Pole.

Presently he said—

“I really don't know. Probably because there *might* be people living there who would like to buy things—jam, for instance.”

“But how did they get the idea?” asked Tommy.

“They didn't get the idea,” said his father. “It was a little piece of steel that got the idea—a little needle. It kept pointing always toward the North Pole, and keeps on doing so still. It evidently wishes to get there. No

doubt there is something up there which it wishes to find. When that little needle is carried southwards in a ship it keeps pointing, pointing over the stern, as if it entirely disapproved of the way it was being made to go.

“It cannot be persuaded to look the other way. If they turn it the other way with their fingers it whirls round again immediately, and keeps shaking its head angrily for some time, until it forgets the insult. It is so eager that it trembles continually—partly, perhaps, because it is afraid of the ship going down, for it knows it would sink in the water ; but principally, no doubt, because it is so anxious to get to its beloved North Pole. But the curious thing is that, when the ship gets near the Equator—which is a fancy line round the earth at exactly the same distance from the North Pole and the South Pole—it begins to get undecided and troubled in its mind, leaves off staring steadily at the north, and keeps casting little hurried glances round the corner in the other direction.

"If you imagine yourself placed between a raspberry tart and a box of tin soldiers you can understand the state of that little needle's mind between the North and South Poles.

"When it gets to the Equator it becomes so naughty as to be quite unmanageable. It trembles and fidgets and shakes its shoulders like a spoilt child, and pouts. It is quite useless to slap it, or to put it in the corner: it will *not* behave itself.

"Now, as the captain steers his ship with the aid of the little needle, he is afraid to offend it deeply for fear that it will refuse to guide him any more; for if it did he would possibly have to wander round and round on the oceans for ever, like the Flying Dutchman, unless he came across a policeman to tell him the way: and there are no policemen on the ocean.

"So, after sitting down by the binnacle



THE SKIPPER
AND THE
NAUGHTY
NEEDLE.

and talking seriously to the needle and quoting a verse or two from Doctor Watts, the captain leaves it alone until it comes to reason again, and asks the stars which way he ought to go ; and the stars wink at him in such a way that he gets the information he requires.

“Very soon he comes to the Southern-Cross-Roads ; and by that time the needle has shaken off its naughty fit, and is beginning to stare steadily at the South Pole as though it wanted to get to *that*.

“This is not a good trait in its character ; for one should not forget an old friend because one is far away from him, and prefer an utter stranger.”

“No,” replied Tommy : for he was naturally a good boy, and knew almost at once that the right thing to say here was “No,” and not “Yes.”

“What is the needle like ?” asked Tommy.

“Like this,” replied his father, taking out a pocket compass ; “only rather larger.”

Tommy thought a moment, and then said—

“ Why do *you* carry one? Is it to help you to find your way to town every day? Does the engine-driver come and look at that when he is in doubt which way to go? Does your needle always point towards home when you are away?”

That is what one's needle *ought* to do, although Tommy did not mean all that.

II

AFTER that conversation Tommy thought a good deal about the North Pole, and decided that he should like to get there and see it and surprise all the other boys at the school with his discovery when he returned after the holidays ; and he grew so interested that he asked his father to give him the compass, and got it.

Next morning he decided to have a try to find the North Pole with the aid of his compass ; so he started early from the garden gate and walked on in the direction pointed out by the blue end of the needle ; but when he had gone across three fields and along a road, he was stopped by a brick wall which stretched away east and west, and blocked his passage.

Here stood a policeman ; and Tommy



"I'M A
FIXED
POINT"

asked him how far he thought the North Pole was.

The policeman pondered a moment, and then said, "I'm afraid *I* can't tell you, because I am a fixed point and never travel further than the second lamp-post there ; but here comes a cabman, and he goes about a great deal and will very likely be able to tell you the fare there. Hi, cabby !"

"Hullo !" said the cabman, pulling up. "North Pole ? Why, now you come to ask me, I can't say as I've ever took a fare there : but jump in, and I'll ask."

But Tommy, having no money, did not jump in ; besides, he wanted the glory of *walking* to the Pole.

So he just went home to breakfast instead.

III

BUT he had not forgotten the North Pole. After breakfast he went into the library, and found several books about Polar expeditions ; and, being intelligent, he learned two things—first, that one must go to the Pole in a ship ; and, second, that it is very difficult to reach because of its being dreadfully cold there, and of there being nothing to eat.

So the first thing was to obtain a ship.

Now Tommy had just bought himself a Noah's ark. He went and looked at that, and sorrowfully decided that it was too small for him to travel in ; but as he looked at it it suddenly occurred to him that it was made out of a piece of a tree.

“Trees grow,” thought Tommy, “and so, of course, a part of a tree will grow, for the tree is made up of parts.” This was wise

reasoning, and was a sort of mixture of his knowledge of Euclid and his own common-sense.

This thought showed him what to do. Beyond the garden was a little wood with trees in it.

Now Tommy had seen the gardener graft a piece of one tree on to another tree, and had seen that the grafted piece grew. This Noah's ark was a piece of a tree ; and consequently if it were grafted on another tree *it* would grow.

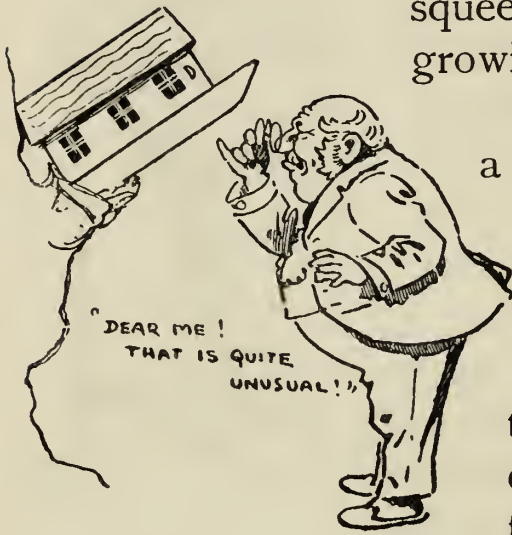
"Q. E. D." murmured Tommy, and carried the ark into the wood.

Then, selecting a healthy tree, he cut a snick in it with his pen-knife and inserted the end of the ark, and bound the bark of the tree over it, and then covered the joint with moist clay ; just as the gardener was in the habit of covering *his* grafts.

Several times every day he went to look at the ark, saying nothing about the affair to anybody.



At the end of a week, to his great delight, the ark was distinctly larger! It had grown nearly an inch; and after that start it grew more and more quickly, until it had become several feet in length and broad to match. In six weeks it was large enough for him to squeeze inside, and was still growing.



He let it grow; for he had a plan in his head, and wanted it rather large.

At the end of two months the ark was of the size required, and then Tommy decided to confide the secret to his father.

"Papa," he said next morning before the time came to start off to school, "will you come down to the wood with me? I want to show you something."

"Dear me!" exclaimed his father on seeing the ark growing on the tree. "That

is quite unusual! What do you propose to do with it?"

"With your permission," replied Tommy, very properly, "I propose to go to the North Pole in it during the Midsummer holidays."

"Hum!" said his father doubtfully. "I don't know what mamma will say to it! How do you propose to manage about meals—and clean socks—and so on?"

"I could take an extra pair of socks," said Tommy; "and as to food, I was anxious to consult you about that and ask your kind assistance. My idea was to live on jam, if you would be so kind as to give me some from the factory. Er—to tell the truth (which, as a good boy, I am always anxious to do), I should require a really large quantity of jam—quite new and hot."

"Well, let me see," said his father thoughtfully. "Have you learned your dates of the kings and queens of England since the Conquest?"

(There they are, you see—those kings

and queens who left their duties for other people to do! One cannot get away from them: and as their dates *must* be learned by somebody, now that they are not here

to do the work themselves,

I suppose the best way is to learn them and have done with it; and,

once having learned them, let us be sure

not to forget them; for

they *may* be useful one

day. At a party, for instance, when one has just been introduced to somebody and cannot find anything to say, the dates of the kings and queens of England since the Conquest might come in very nicely and prevent



an awkward silence.)

Tommy placed his hands behind him and tried. He got on fairly well on the whole; and as his father had forgotten

Tommy Twister's Discovery 255

the exact order of succession himself he did not notice a few little errors, such as placing William the Third before Stephen, and Richard the Second immediately after Charles the First.

" William the First	.	.	1066-1087
William the Second	.	.	1087-1100
William the Third	.	.	1100-1135
Stephen	.	.	1135-1154
William the Fourth	.	.	1154-1189
Richard the First	.	.	1189-1199
John	.	.	1199-1216,"

said Tommy, and so on to Victoria. Victoria had only one date, which was a little puzzling, and threw things out a bit.

"Ye—es, that's pretty fair—pretty fair," said Tommy's father. "I will see about it. Perhaps we had better not mention it to mamma: it might make her anxious. If you promise to return quickly, she will think you are only kept in at school to write a hundred lines—she knows you don't write very fast."

So the thing was settled ; and papa assisted Tommy to drag down the ark to the stream which ran past the little wood ; and they left it on the bank, hidden by some bracken which they piled over it.

IV

THE next morning Tommy got up very early and packed some things for the voyage—an extra pair of socks, some toffee, his nightey, a top, some string, a box of matches, a night light, “Robinson Crusoe,” some of Skelt’s characters in “The Miller and his Men,” and a white mouse. One never knows what one may require on a voyage; and these things would be certain to be useful in emergencies.

Then Tommy crept in on tip-toe and kissed his mother while she slept; and winked confidentially at his father who had woke early in order to see the last of him, and now slipped half-a-crown into his hand for any expenses that might occur at the North Pole.

Tommy went down to his ark, and slid it

quietly into the stream, and jumped aboard ; but when the ark had fairly started down the stream he burst into tears at the thought of the home he had left behind, and his mother, and two apples which he had forgotten to bring.

He had a great secret—a plan for keeping warm at the North Pole—which he had not said a word about to anybody, even his father : for he knew how things *will* leak out ; and he was afraid of Doctor Nansen or some one finding out his secret and making use of it.

As the ark turned a bend in the stream whom should Tommy see on the bank but Billy Bunson, a school chum of his. It happened that Billy had got up early too, to fish.

“Hullo, Tommy Twister!” called Billy. “Where are *you* off to?”

Tommy felt angry at first at being found out ; but it then occurred to him that Billy was a good sort, and that it might be lonely for one at the North Pole ; so he stopped the ark and said—

“I’m going to find the North Pole. Come on!”



**BILLY
BUNSON.**

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"But they'll miss me, and think I'm drowned," said Billy doubtfully.

"Leave a note to say you will be back to tea," said Tommy.

"Right you are!" said Billy. "How you do think of things! Won't it be cold at the North Pole? Hadn't I better go and fetch my comforter?"

"Oh, that's all right," said Tommy; "I know how to keep us warm—you'll see! But you'll want a few things. You ought to have an extra pair of socks, and a pen-knife—and, I say!" (Billy was hurrying off to fetch the things.) "I say—you might bring your stamp-album and 'Jack Sheppard.'"

Billy soon returned with these necessities, and they shoved off again. Presently they emerged from the little stream on to the big river; and in twenty minutes or so they had hauled up alongside Tommy's father's jam-factory.

The foreman had been told about the affair and expected them, and had a cargo of boiling jam ready to load the hold of the

ark with. The jam was quickly shot into the hold, sending up a tremendous cloud of fragrant steam.

"We mustn't let the heat out," cried Tommy. "Be quick and help me put on the hatches—that's it."

The jam was completely boxed in now so that no more steam escaped, for Tommy had carefully prepared for that.

Then away they went down the big river, on the stream.

People on the bank stopped to admire the ark as it floated gracefully down, for it had a very gay and beautiful effect with its pretty red roof painted to represent tiles and so make it look as much like Noah's own ark as possible. Its sides were white, with windows painted on them in blue ; though whether these had really been copied directly from Noah's ark itself, or whether the artist had only done them from hearsay, I do not know ; though they might be able to tell you at the Lowther Arcade. There were no real windows, because these would have let out the heat ; and the idea was to keep the heat in.



And now, while the ark is getting down to the sea, I will reveal to you Tommy's great idea for keeping warm at the North Pole.

Have you ever been rash enough to bite a jam-tart without waiting for it to cool a little? If you have—and most of us have, though *only once*—you will remember that you were a long time before you decided to leave off regretting your haste. How long a mouthful of hot jam will continue scalding one I do not know—and I do not intend to try.

At any rate I know that the longer you keep it in your mouth and dance about and make faces, the scaldinger and scaldinger it seems to get; and I know that you don't forget it for days. Nobody has ever invented anything that will retain heat longer than jam; and, if any one ever does, don't take a bite at it until you have walked round it one hundred times, and then sat and watched it for an hour or two.

Very well—Tommy had found out how jam retains its heat. He had howled a good deal—as well as the jam would let him

—while he was engaged in the discovery ; and ever afterwards, when he had seen hot jam he had approached it very slowly, and walked round it with his legs stiff, like your terrier and the terrier next door walk round each other when they have had words.

That—I don't mean the ways of terriers, but the hotness of jam—was TOMMY'S GREAT IDEA.

Doctor Nansen never thought of it, nor any one else ; for if they had, of course *they* would have discovered the North Pole, and this beautiful story would not have been written.

Suddenly, when the ark had got well out to sea, Tommy suddenly sat down bang on the deck and said, "Ooh ! I say !"

"What's the matter ?" said Billy.

"Why, we've forgotten the buns for the Polar bears ; and they'll be *so* cross ! Very likely they won't let us pass ! What shall we do ?

"There's a ship coming," said Billy. "Let us speak her. She may have some buns."

She was an ocean liner — one of the

Cunard Line. Tommy got on the roof of the ark and made signals of distress ; and the liner (which was trying to make the fastest passage on record) changed her course, and hove to alongside them. When the captain learned that Tommy had brought him out of his course because he wanted buns, he was very angry at first ; but he calmed down, and said he had a large paper bag full of buns which he was taking over to his aged mother at New York. She had been ordered buns by her doctor ; but the captain gave Tommy half the bagful ; and Tommy thanked him politely and set sail again—that is, he didn't set sail, having no sails to set ; for he had heard that Doctor Nansen intended to drift across the North Pole by the aid of the ocean currents ; and Tommy had decided that it would save trouble if *he* drifted all the way there and back too—thus proving that he had thought the thing out more thoroughly than Doctor Nansen.

Well, they drifted and drifted.

“I say!” cried Tommy, sitting down again bang on the deck, “we’ve forgotten

to bring anything to eat—my toffee won't last out."

"I thought of that," said Billy triumphantly. "I've brought the tiddlers I caught in the river—and there's the jam!"

"Why, of course there is—I forgot that," said Tommy.

"I say," said Billy, puffing and taking off his coat, "isn't it hot?"

It was. The heat of the jam had begun to penetrate through the wood of the ark, and the deck was getting quite painful to stand on.

"Never mind," said Tommy. "Put up with it. We shall soon be among the ice; and then you'll be glad to be so warm and cosy. How are the currents now?"

"Currants? Have you brought some currants? Hooray!" cried Billy. "I love currants!"

"Pooh!" replied Tommy. "I mean k-u-r—er—k-u-r-*u*-n-t-s—not k-u-r—not the things they put in the Christmas pudding."

They did very well for food—that is there was plenty; but it was a little samey. For dinner they had jam and tiddlers; but they

were sparing with the tiddlers, because there was only a small supply.

They came to floating lumps of ice.

"We must be getting near the North Pole," said Tommy. "How's the compass?"

For he had not forgotten to bring away the compass with him. It was hanging up on a nail on the wall.

"It's pointing up to the sky," said Billy.

"What nonsense!" said Tommy. "*That* can't be the way to the North Pole. It must be a bad compass—or perhaps it hasn't been wound up."

"*Wound up!*" said Billy in deep scorn. "Compasses don't want winding up!"

"Oh," said Tommy, "*don't* they? I suppose you are going to teach *me* about compasses? Whose compass is that—mine or yours?"

"Why, yours."

"Very well then," retorted Tommy. "Perhaps I ought to know it best. I don't care a bit what other compasses want—*mine* wants winding up."

And he took it down and pretended to

wind it up. It was the first time that he had tried to deceive any one, and he did not feel at all comfortable about it in his mind, and did the thing very awkwardly: but he had said compasses wanted winding up; and he had always heard that an Englishman should stick to what he says.

Then he hung it up again on the nail, but it still pointed up to the sky.

"Yah—it doesn't go any better," sneered Billy.

"I may have overwound it," said Tommy firmly.

He shook it; but it would not leave off pointing to the sky.

"Perhaps it's too hot for it in here," he said. "Some compasses won't register above so many degrees Fahr.—you know."

"You aren't thinking of thermometers, are you?" asked Billy. That was Billy's bad point: he would argue things.

"Of course not, stupid!" said Tommy.

"Perhaps it doesn't like being hung up to a nail," remarked Billy. "Try sticking it flat on the floor."

Just to humour Billy, Tommy took it down and laid it on the floor; and the needle immediately began to tremble and swing, and then pointed steadily in one direction, only quivering just a little.

"I'm sure it goes a little better flat," said Billy.

"Oh, just a scrap better," replied Tommy. "But it looks nicer hanging up; and it's my compass."

So he hung it up again; but they agreed that it had gone wrong, and they would not direct their course by it. After all it was the wisest way, as there might have been a lot of difficulties about steering up toward the sky.

Presently they got right among the ice—such lovely icebergs there were, flashing all sorts of brilliant colours to the sun. There was a Polar bear on one of the icebergs.

"Let's give him a little bit of bun," said Tommy, "and ask him whether we're right for the North Pole."

They did so.

"Yes, all right," replied the bear. "Tell

you what, I've taken the wrong iceberg and come right out of my way; and there isn't an iceberg back till to-morrow morning. If you'll take me in tow, I'll point out the way as we go on—I live not very far from the North Pole—only about three turnings short of it."

"You won't bite or hug if we take you in tow?" asked Tommy cautiously.

"No fear," said the bear. "Fain suspecting a fellow. I wouldn't do such a thing! I'll act square."

"How jolly warm and cosy it is near that boat of yours!" said the bear presently. "What have you got aboard."

"Jam," replied Tommy. "Do you like jam?"

"Well, now you come to speak of it, as the saying is," said the bear reflectively, "I can't say as I ever exactly tasted it. It doesn't grow much at the North Pole. Is it anyways like blubber?"

"What! that nasty greasy fat stuff?" exclaimed Tommy. "No fear!"

The bear was evidently hurt at this.

"Other folks have palates as well as you," he said sulkily. "Although you *are* so stuck up, I flatter myself I know what's good—and I kind of most always have blubber for lunch."

You will have noticed that the bear did not talk very grammatically; but you can't when you live at the North Pole. If you keep your mouth open too long, polishing off your sentences and getting them neat at the edges, the cold gets in—and there you are!

"First to the left, and second to the right, after we've passed that big glacier," said the bear. "I say, it *is* warm near your boat: I think I'll take my overcoat off if you don't mind appearances?"

The ice-scenery was growing grander and grander every moment. The picture of it here is very nice—beautifully drawn and all that; but it doesn't show you all the colours flashing from those ice-mountains. It is very difficult to give them in black printer's-ink.

Then they came to a solid wall of ice as high as the highest church you ever saw,

and as high as twenty other churches piled on the top of it too.

There was no hole in this great wall for the ark to go through.

"Dear me!" said the bear, "we're late; and they must have closed for the night. We can't get through."

But Tommy knew better; and now came his triumph. He just slightly opened one of the hatches; and out came the steam of the hot jam. It warmed the air so much that the ice-wall began to dissolve in front of the ark, until there was a clear way right through. Then they went through the channel, and came to a great ice-plain covered with beautiful villas. Everything was made of ice—villas, trees, flowers—everything. The trees and flowers were lovely—like those one sees on the window when one gets up in frosty weather.

"This is where I live—that's my villa," said the bear. "Hullo, I say—just sheer off a bit; you're melting my bay-windows."

So they turned the boat's head a little, to keep away from the villas; and it was as



'I'LL TAKE OFF MY
OVERCOAT.'"

well that they did, for the ice close to the boat was actually beginning to boil, and the heat was spreading out at a great rate. Having called on Mrs. Bear and been introduced to the cubs, Tommy and Billy left a present of buns and jam, and proceeded once more on their way.

"I'll see you through—the Pole's only a step from here—just a cockstride, as the saying is," said the bear.

They got along easily enough, the heat from the jam having penetrated the wood so thoroughly that the ark was quite hot, and Tommy and Billy were glad to sit on the roof in their shirts and pants. The bear preferred to walk a little way in front on the solid ice.

Then they came to the highest range of mountains any one ever saw : the Himalayas would have looked like a pebble on the side of them.

"The Pole's the other side of them," said the bear.

"All right," said Tommy. "Stand clear, old un!"

And Tommy and Billy turned the ark until the side which could be slid off was facing the mountains ; then they slid off the side, and opened the largest hatch, and ran a long way off.

The steam which arose from the scalding jam filled the whole sky ; and the heat was so great that the mountains began to disappear for a space half a mile wide. The bear took off his waistcoat and fanned himself with it ; but he and the boys were on the side of the ark turned away from the mountains, and so greatly sheltered from the heat.

You see the open ark acted like a Dutch oven, and formed a hot chamber which threw the heat on to the mountains.

The half-mile gap through the mountains was quite clear now. But who was to put the hatch on again ?

They managed it somehow—I don't quite know how ; but I know that an English boy can do anything if he really tries : and that's enough for *me*.

You might say one could not grow up

into a man and have a long beard, if you had never seen an English boy before. It is certainly a very clever thing to do, and takes a long time ; but English boys *do* do it by persevering. No girl can do it—not even an English girl ; and this proves that boys are superior to girls—but you always knew that, didn't you ?

Then they sailed comfortably through the gap in the mountains, and found themselves in the midst of a vast valley where everything was ice.

“This,” said the bear, “is the North Pole itself, where all the penny ices come from.”

Then the boys suddenly perceived a very angry person, all white and with a very sharp nose and claws, striding towards them. “Look out ! That's Jack Frost,” whispered the bear.

“Who are these strangers trespassing on my land ?” shouted Jack ; “I'll NIP you !—that is, unless you want to buy some penny ices.”

And he went to a grindstone, and began

grinding his pet tooth which he nipped with.

"Now I'll nip you!" he said, advancing in a determined way.

But Billy quickly opened one of the hatches a very little.

"What's that steam you have there?" asked Jack Frost. "Whew! how hot it's suddenly got! What on earth's the matter?"

And he flopped down on the ice, and began fanning himself.

"We'll melt you if you're not civil," said both the boys together. "Better come to terms!"

"Well—ooh!—What do you want me to—oh! for goodness' sake shut that thing, or I shall faint."

"Why, the fact is we've come to have a look round and see what the North Pole's like," said Tommy. "And we mean to."

"Hee hee! You'll freeze!" said Jack Frost.

"Oh, *shall* we!" said Billy, pretending to be going to open the hatch again.

"Oh, don't," cried Jack Frost. "I'll be



good. I had forgotten that thing. . . . Tell you what!" he said with a sudden idea, "with that warming apparatus of yours we might make some of my penny ices hot! Then I could sell boiling ices as well as cold ones—most comforting on a cold day! Look here, let's go into partnership."

"Very well," said the boys. "And now tell us all about the North Pole."

"Well—this is it that you see; only you can't see it. That's because it's covered with ice; but underneath the ice there's the most wonderful country you can possibly imagine—there isn't a thing that doesn't grow here—toys, bottled ginger-beer, fireworks, hardbake, cricket-matches, half-holidays—everything. Those things all grow naturally, on trees, and shrubs, and out of the ground without the trouble of making them: only they're covered with ice."

"Oh, we'll soon put *that* right," said Tommy excitedly. "Stand clear!"

Then he pulled off a hatch, and gradually the whole air was warmed for miles round;

and the ice began to dissolve from the face of the land—ice half a mile thick ; and the real country began to appear.

Such a wonderful country ! There were great firework trees, covered with natural fireworks of all kinds ; and as it was just the season for them to be ripe, they began going off the moment they were uncovered from the ice. There were half-holiday bushes, covered with ripe half-holidays all ready for picking ; there were grammar-bushes, Latin-bushes, arithmetic-shrubs, and so forth, all covered with lessons ready learned, and only requiring to be picked ; there were story-telling trees (I don't mean untruthful trees ; but trees which related tales of adventure and fairy-tales to any one who sat under them).

It really *was* a wonderful country !

"I've never been able to see it before," said Jack Frost, "because I never had the means of warming the ice away. I was only told about it by my great-great-great-great-great-grandmother. I really must confess that I prefer this to ice ; and I shall manage to get used to the change of climate."

So the boys and Jack Frost shook hands, and became the best of friends ; and Tommy Twister and Billy Bunson have returned to their native land to arrange with Tommy's father for a constant supply of hot jam to be regularly conveyed to the North Pole by a line of steam arks, so that there will be no more ice there any more—except, of course, hot penny ices.

They intend to export the produce of the country ; and the thing is certain to pay. I know that *you*, for one, will buy a great deal of the fruit off the lesson-trees when it arrives here. Jack Frost has been appointed resident manager, and altogether it's an excellent thing for the jam trade.



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